DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 085 666 CS 000 858

AUTHOR	Waterman, David C., Ed.; Gibbs, Vanita M., Ed.
TITLE	Oral Language and Reading; Proceedings of the Annual Reading Conference of the Department of Elementary Education at Indiana State University (3rd, Terre Haute, June 14-15, 1973).
INSTITUTION	Indiana State Univ., Terre Haute. Curriculum Research and Development Center.
PUB DATE	Nov 73
NOTE	74p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Curriculum Research and Development Center, Jamison Hall, School of Education, Indiana State University, Terre Haute, Indiana 47809 ($1.00)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*Conference Reports; Individualized Reading; Informal Reading Inventory; Language Development; *Language Skills; *Oral Expression; Reading; Reading Comprehension; *Reading Development; Reading Diagnosis; Reading Improvement; *Reading Instruction; Reading Materials; Reading Skills; Remedial Reading; Teaching Techniques

ABSTRACT

This pamphlet is a collection of the speeches given at the Third Annual Reading Conference at Indiana State University, Terre Haute. The theme of the conference was "Oral Language and Reading." The contents include: "Official Program"; opening remarks, "They Led and Followed," by William G. McCarthy; opening address, "Strategies for Reading Comprehension," by Dorothy J. Watson; "The Folktale is Alive and Well," by Charles Blaney; "Some Thoughts on Early Language Development" by Diane Brown; "The Play's the Thing" by Eva Chipper; "A Spoonful of Sugar" by Millie Ann Vaughn; "Monitoring Children"s Reading Behavior" by Lucille Guckes; "Individualizing Reading" by Pearl Lee Nester; "The Use of Oral Language by the Diagnostic Teacher" by Lawrence L. Smith; and the closing address, "Pitfalls and Pleasures of Individualizing the Reading Program," by Priscilla Lynch. (WR)

ED 085666

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Proceedings

of the

1973

Third Annual

Reading Conference

June 14-15

ORAL LANGUAGE AND READING

CURRICULUM RESEARCH
AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION,

INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

TERRE HAUTE

CS 000 858

FILMED FROM BEST AVAILABLE COPY

THE CURRICULUM RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER

School of Education, Indiana State University

The Curriculum Research and Development Center of Indiana State University provides school systems the opportunity to secure aid, encouragement, and cooperation in curriculum development projects. It coordinates the participation of University personnel engaged in curriculum work, provides information concerning curriculum development, and initiates and sponsors curriculum research projects. It is the contact point where public schools initiate inquiries regarding curriculum and acts as a vehicle for communication between elementary and secondary schools and the University. Although the CRDC operates as an agency of the School of Education, it represents all departments of the University engaged in curriculum development projects.

Services of the Center are of these major types:

Consultant services—The Center makes available specialists in various curriculum areas to aid in curriculum development. This is on a contract basis and can be adjusted to the needs of the particular task.

Leadership—In the Center, University personnel and others have an agency through which curriculum change can be advocated and other opportunities to exercise leadership provided.

Workshop and Conferences—One function of the Curriculum Research and Development Center is the planning and directing of on-campus conferences and workshops as well as those carried on in a school system engaged in curriculum development.

Printed Materials—The Center produces courses of study, bibliographies, and similar materials.

Research and Experimentation—The Center provides an environment which encourages research through supplying materials and services needed for experimentation, providing an atmosphere for communication and sharing of ideas, and aiding in acquiring funds for worthy projects.

David T. Turney
Dean, School of Education

Charles D. Hopkins
Director

ED 085666

Proceedings

of the

1973

Third Annual

Reading Conference

June 14-15

ORAL LANGUAGE AND READING

CURRICULUM RESEARCH
AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION,

INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

● TERRE HAUTE

The material for this bulletin was organized by:

David C. Waterman
Professor of Education
Indiana State University

Vanita M. Gibbs
Professor of Education
Indiana State University

Published by:

The Curriculum Research and
Development Center
School of Education
Indiana State University
Terre Haute, Indiana

November, 1973

FOREWORD

Just as the child is the father of the man so oral language is the precursor of the written word. The excellent teaching ideas described in this volume should help us to become more skillful in motivating children to communicate orally and thus strengthen their desire to read what others are communicating to them. The freedom for children to express their ideas orally and kinesthetically is important for the total development of the whole child. It is this development of the whole child through drama, extemporaneous speech, poetry, story telling and high interest reading based upon individual children's interests that is emphasized in this volume.

A great measure of appreciation is due Dr. Vanita Gibbs and Dr. David Waterman for their vigorous and untiring efforts to bring people with a reading message together for this conference. May the ideas expressed herein help you to assist boys and girls in the free development of their oral language expression. May this expression lead them to read more effectively and to grow in value as humane persons.

William G. McCarthy
Chairman, Department of
Elementary Education

PREFACE

Over six hundred students and teachers attended this Third Annual Reading Conference, which is sponsored by the Department of Elementary Education at Indiana State University. We have seen an increase in interest in reading by those who have participated in these conferences. That the University has a genuine commitment to improving the teaching of reading is attested to by the fact that these conferences have been held without cost to the many students, teachers, and lay public who have attended and participated. The not-insignificant costs have been borne by the Department of Elementary Education and the Office of Summer Sessions and Academic Services, and costs have in part been held down through the generous participation of our own faculty and local teachers in the afternoon sessions, and by the defrayment of Dr. Lynch's expenses by Scholastic Magazines.

A variety of topics appropriate to our theme, "Oral Language and Reading," will be found in these proceedings. Because those attending the conference could not attend all the afternoon sessions, we hope the inclusion of these afternoon papers will suggest further ideas and techniques of bringing oral language and reading together. We are pleased that the Proceedings of the First and Second of this series of reading conferences have been included in the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, and abstracts of these are printed in Research in Education. Copies of these former proceedings are also still available from the Curriculum Research and Development Center at Indiana State University for $1.00 per copy.

As co-chairmen of the conference, we wish to express our appreciation to the staff of the Department of Elementary Education for their assistance and encouragement in making the Third Annual Reading Conference a reality. We are also indebted to Mrs. Wayne Fry for her assistance in securing speakers and in holding a reception for them. We also invite our readers, whether they are students, teachers, or just those interested in teaching reading, to our Fourth Annual Reading Conference, which will be held during the summer of 1974.

Vanita Gibbs
David C. Waterman

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OFFICIAL PROGRAM 1

OPENING REMARKS

"THEY LED AND FOLLOWED"
by William G. McCarthy 3

OPENING ADDRESS

STRATEGIES FOR READING COMPREHENSION
by Dorothy J. Watson 5

PAPERS DELIVERED

THE FOLKTALE IS ALIVE AND WELL
by Charles Blaney 17

SOME THOUGHTS ON EARLY LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT
by Diane Brown. 22

THE PLAY'S THE THING
by Eva Chipper. 30

"A SPOONFUL OF SUGAR"
by Millie Ann Vaughn. 32

MONITORING CHILDREN'S READING BEHAVIOR
by Lucille Guckes 37

INDIVIDUALIZING READING
by Pearl Lee Nester 44

THE USE OF ORAL LANGUAGE BY THE DIAGNOSTIC TEACHER
by Lawrence L. Smith 54

CLOSING ADDRESS

PITFALLS AND PLEASURES OF INDIVIDUALIZING THE READING PROGRAM
by Priscilla Lynch 60

ORAL LANGUAGE
AND READING

P R O G R A M OF
THIRD ANNUAL READING CONFERENCE

THURSDAY, a.m., June 14, 1973,

9:30 - 11:00 - Holmstedt Hall, Room 103

Opening Remarks: William G. McCarthy, Chairman
Department of Elementary Education
Indiana State University

Welcome: Harriet D. Darrow, Dean
Summer Sessions and Academic Services
Indiana State University

Introduction of Speaker:
David C. Waterman
Conference Co-Chairman

Speaker: Dorothy J. Watson
Wayne State University

"Developing Strategies for Meaning"

THURSDAY, p.m., June 14, 1973

1:30 - 2:20

Room 20 - Holmstedt Hall
Charles Blaney
"Oral Tradition Through Folktales"

Room 27 - Holmstedt Hall
Diane Brown
"What's New In Early Language Development?"

Unit C - Holmstedt Hall
Eva Chipper
"The Play's the Thing"

Room 116 - Holmstedt Hall
Millie Vaughn
"A Spoonful of Sugar"

2:30 - 3:20

Room 20 - Holmstedt Hall
Lucille Guckes
"Monitoring Children's Reading Growth"

Room 27 - Holmstedt Hall
Pearl Nester
"Individualizing Reading"

Room 116 - Holmstedt Hall
Lawrence L. Smith
"Diagnosis and Oral Language"

FRIDAY, June 15, 1973

9:30 - 11:00 - Holmstedt Hall, Room 103

Introduction of Speaker:
Vanita Gibbs
Conference Co-Chairman

Speaker: Priscilla Lynch, Director
Professional Services, Scholastic Magazines
"Pitfalls and Pleasures of Individualizing the Reading Program"

OPENING REMARKS

"They Led and Followed"

William G. McCarthy

Standing on the courthouse lawn of the southern Indiana town of Madison, shaded by hackberries and sycamores, is a statue dedicated to the memory of those brave and gallant soldiers who fought to preserve the Union. It is a simple, rugged marker with four words chiseled in granite, "They Led and Followed" in memory of the 7th Indiana Regiment. In the spring of 1863, General Lee was marching to conquer the northern territory. Invading Pennsylvania, he was seeking to show European countries the strength of the Confederate States of America so that they would continue to ship arms and other supplies to southern ports.

To respond to this danger and to protect the states of the Union, President Abraham Lincoln mobilized the National Guard Forces. Men from southern Indiana were recruited into the 7th Indiana Regiment to preserve the Union of States. They led in the preservation of this Union of States. They followed patriotic values which they had learned in the log cabin schools from traveling teachers in this frontier land. They withstood the force of the Confederacy that was seeking to divide our Country.

There is another monument to the brave Indiana footsoldier. It is at the crest of Cemetery Ridge in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, as a remembrance of the Battle of Gettysburg. It was here that the Indiana 7th and 38th regiments were successful in defeating General Robert E. Lee and the forces of the Confederacy seeking to divide our country. "They Led and Followed." These forebears of ours were knowledgeable enough to lead in the preservation of the Union of States and the emancipation of slaves. They followed patriotic values which they had learned in the new land.

We are participants in a struggle, just as during the Civil War soldiers from Indiana were engaged in a physical military struggle. During that time they were engaged in a contest to preserve the Union and to free the slaves. We are engaged in a challenge for the development of people's minds and souls. Development through reading is a primary avenue for development of children and adults. Reading, oral and written communication are the primary pathways for human enlightenment and growth.

We hope that this conference with its nine presentations and many participants will help you to "lead and follow." We hope that what you learn here will help you in your daily challenge of teaching for the development of minds and souls. We hope that what you learn in this conference will supplement your master's degree with a reading emphasis and that you will become leaders in the teaching of reading and followers of inspiring ideals and effective teaching practices.

In our work, we do not receive the shoulder straps of a colonel, the gold braid of an officer or the chevrons of a sergeant. However, we have rewards as great or greater because we have a knowledge of the worth of our work with boys and girls. We too lead and follow. We lead young people and we inspire them to follow the values which lead to a life filled with as much satisfaction as one can reasonably expect.

STRATEGIES FOR READING COMPREHENSION

Dorothy J. Watson

In one way or another, as a student or as a teacher, I have spent many years in the education business. But in all those years I remember only three special times of being keenly aware that learning was taking place; taking place naturally, freely, and without frustration.

The first magic-moment occurred when I was a third-grade student, in a little town in Oklahoma. Across from the elementary school that I attended there was a vacant lot, the site of a new grocery store. Suddenly, one morning, just as my reading group was called, we heard the grind, thud, crunch of a steam shovel biting huge chunks out of the earth. My teacher, who was wise in the ways of kids and learning, and who also possessed a curious spirit of her own, urged us to go to the window where we stood gazing in wonder as the bulldozer did its job. You can imagine the questions, "What are they doing? What's happening?" Our teacher did not reply in a condescending or qualifying way. She said simply, "They are excavating for the foundation of the new grocery store." She did not consult her third-grade word-list to see if excavate appeared on it. She did not check any scheme of behavioral objectives to find out if we were scheduled to learn this rather technical concept. Nor was there any preconceived notion concerning the joy we would have in using our newly acquired knowledge...telling our less-aware playmates, brothers, sisters, parents, anyone who would listen, about the excavation going on across from school. She did, however, knowingly and willfully aid and abet in the "wasting of our reading-instruction time."

The second magic-moment occurred many years later when I was visiting a student-teacher in an inner-city school in Kansas City, Missouri. Some of the kindergarteners were taking clay cookies out of the play oven, and as one child started to pick a cookie off the sheet the student-teacher said, "Here, use this spatula, so you won't get burned." The teacher went about her business, but she left a five-year old with a new word tickling her tongue, and it wasn't five minutes before I heard the child say to another cook who was taking raspberry, plasticene cookies out of the oven, "Did you know that the flip-over is a spatula and you oughtta use it so's you won't get burned? The cookies come out easier too." The word and the idea spread.

Dorothy J. Watson, Wayne State University

And the last magic-moment occurred a few years ago when I visited a teacher with her class on a little knoll overlooking the ocean in Sierra Leone, West Africa. As I joined the group they were scanning the horizon, arms were beginning to swing as if the movement were helping with their learning and I heard, "Horizon, horizontal, oh, I see!" Then one little boy, as if suddenly something clicked, began moving his hand up and down and he offered, "Vertical? Vertical. Vertical." The teacher explained later that she had come to realize that her students had no concept of horizontal and vertical, despite the fact that they had seen and spoken the word many times in math class. She decided that during reading time, which was held on the knoll during fair weather, she would point out the horizon and see if the children could make the connection between something that was quite familiar to them to something that was vague and relatively unfamiliar to them. It was smooth sailing from horizon to horizontal, and as an added bonus one of the students remembered the antonym, vertical.

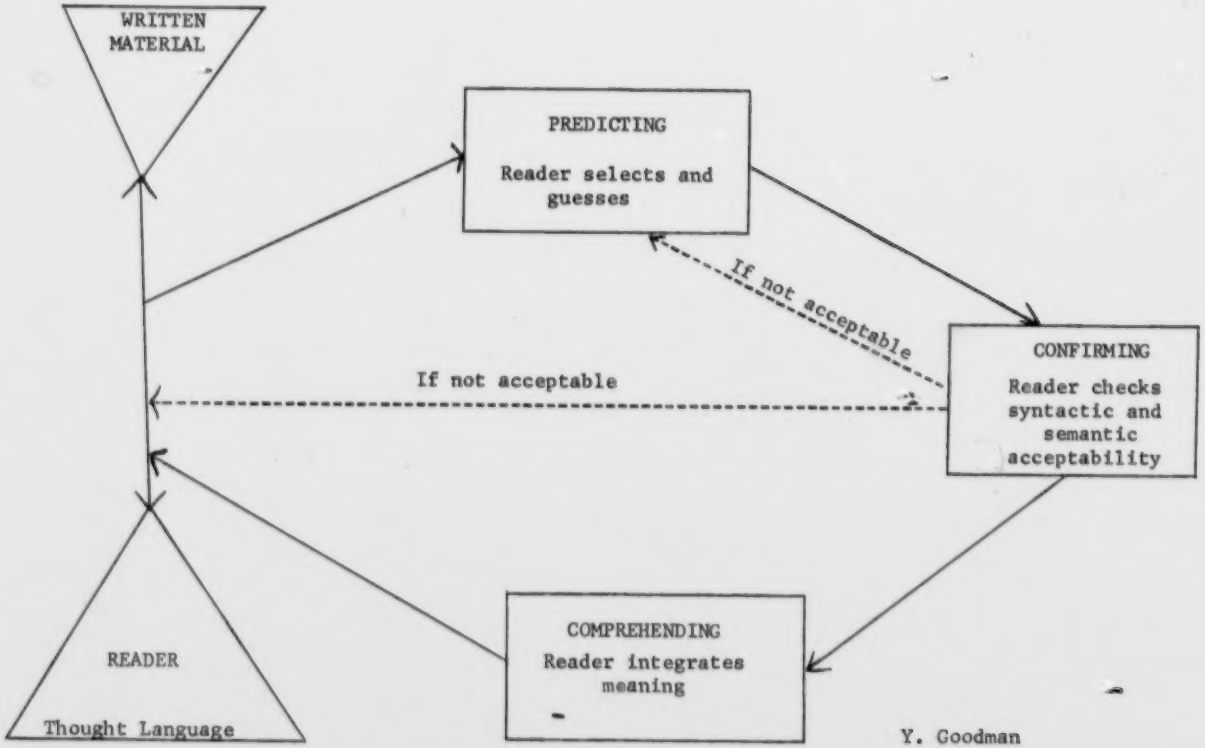
Three magic moments. Learning taking place not in a vacuum, not as a "dummy run," but with real kids in real situations. I'm sure that incidents such as these happen every hour of every day in classrooms around the world. But I'm also sure that just as many of these golden, teachable moments do not reach fruition.

What does all this have to do with reading, with developing strategies for meaning? Everything. For it is at this concept building stage that reading comprehension begins; a vital part of reading takes place before a reader opens a book. You can be sure that the first time I met excavate in print, in context, that I did not laboriously sound out the word, nor did anyone have to color code it or put it into a talking typewriter for me. And I feel confident that when those kindergarteners first encountered spatula in print, in context, that they did not have to divide it into syllables, pat out the accent pattern, or use it in five "good sentences" in order to read it. And the Sierra Leonian children's previous trouble with horizontal was ameliorated, not by finding it on a word-list, not by writing it ten times and using it in a "proper" sentence, rather by experiencing it.

If reading is going from the graphic representation to the phonemic representation (barking at print), then we need not concern ourselves with such activities. But if reading is understanding, then we must agree that such concepts are the stuff that understanding is made of.

In developing strategies for meaning, we will work within the framework of a Proficient Silent Reading Model which was developed by Yetta Goodman and Carolyn Burke. This is a simplified view of the reading process and is a modification of Kenneth Goodman's more extensive model of reading (K. Goodman, 1970).

PROFICIENT SILENT READING MODEL



Y. Goodman
C. Burke

Looking at the model, we can identify those points at which teachers can help students maximize their knowledge of the language and strengthen their reading strategies. Within the framework of the model, the reader's first experience is his encounter with the author. Here the reader brings his personal world, his uniqueness, his singular abilities as well as his flaws and past failures to interact with the written material. Here is where, hopefully, there is a great deal of prior conceptual knowledge--a lot of excavates, spatulas, and horizontals. For it is such knowledge that gives the reader the edge in processing the information he is about to encounter. With such knowledge he can make some predictions about what the author is saying, he can ignore redundant features of the text, he can be comfortable enough to decode in his own dialect while preserving the deep structure of the passage, and he can be more aware of the need for correcting or rereading when the sense or rhythm of the sentence is destroyed. It would seem, then, that having a storehouse of conceptual knowledge can be parlayed to inestimable lengths--not the least of which is becoming a proficient and efficient reader.

The meeting between the reader and his world with the author and his world can lead to varying degrees of success or frustration, depending on what the reader and author bring to each other. The author, through his use of syntax, semantics, and orthography, must express meaning in a way that allows the reader to actively participate with the content and the language. The closer the match between the thought and language of the author and the reader, the easier the task and the greater the degree of communication.

It would seem, then, that the building of concepts is a basic responsibility of the teacher. And because of the nature of concept building, it is vital that the teacher nurture a child's positive psycholinguistic environment. A child whose language is rejected may decide that his safeguard against disapproval is to retreat from words--either spoken or written. The English educator and writer James Britton (1970) has discussed the educational significance of the acceptance of the language of children:

> . . . it is important that no child in the class should be a non-talker, for the listening and the producing need to interact. . . . there can be no alternative in the initial stages to total acceptance of the language the children bring with them. (Britton, 1970)

Britton has stressed that language use must consist of "operations" and not of "dummy runs."

> . . . Children must continue to use language to make sense of the world; they must practice language in the sense in which a doctor 'practices' medicine and not in the sense in which a juggler 'practices' a new trick before he performs it.
> (Britton, 1970)

Because practice is so essential, Britton urges an emphasis on "talking and doing." He suggests that children work in pairs since such a small group results in greater amounts of relevant talk. As students gain experience in talking with one another and with the teacher, they begin the "forging of links between language and first-hand experience." Britton says that some of the most useful talk has to do with simple events and activities that take place inside and outside school. He believes that such talk merges with all the talk that arises from a universe of poems and stories. Such acceptance of the child's language and encouragement of children's talk might well be considered as our first strategies for meaning.

Before returning to the reading model, let's look at our language, and at its subsystems which provide cues for the reader. Within the language there are three very important subsystems: 1) the grapho-phonic system which includes the language's graphemes (letters, punctuation marks, capital forms, etc.) and the language's phonemic or sound system; 2) the syntactic system which cues the reader with word-order, intonation and morphological forms, that is, with all the structural devices that signal structural meaning; and 3) the semantic system which has to do with the sense or meaning provided through the word, the phrase, the clause, the sentence and the passage.

It is important to remember that good readers have good control over all three systems. Occasionally, depending on context, one cueing system may momentarily become preeminently important; however, never in the real world of full language are the subsystems isolated and used separately.

Two things must be kept in mind: first, our job is to help students become proficient with all three subsystems, and second, in developing strategies for meaning we must attend to the inherent and overall unity of the language.

Within the reading process there is an organization that requires all readers (the beginner as well as the experienced) to use certain decoding strategies. These strategies are, in a sense, stored in the long-term memory of the reader, and are energized within the grapho-phonic, syntactic, and semantic subsystems of the language when the reader interacts with print. These strategies (indicated on the model) involve predicting, confirming, correcting, and integrating meaning; they are available to the accomplished reader as well as to the bungler, and to the efficient reader as well as to the inefficient reader. The accomplished, efficient reader, however, has sufficiently mastered these strategies and consequently reads with ease; the inefficient bungler fails to take full advantage of the strategies, labors over the

task, often failing to decode, that is, failing to get to meaning. A fifth-grade reader, Tim, illustrates this point:

1. Rain could not wash him away and he was contented.

2. Men were shouting directions to his father and the cries of many gulls added to the noise.

Tim was so concerned with making a graphophonic match of each lexical item that he allowed the sentence to become meaningless. His inherent syntactic sense pulled him toward an utterance that sounded like English. Unfortunately, it made no sense.

At the outset of the reading process, the reader scans the page by moving his eyes from left to right down the page, fixing on lines of print. His perceptions are formed, based on what is graphically cued and on what is expected. Consequently the final perceptual image is a hybrid of what the reader expects and what he actually sees. The efficient reader samples just enough from print to confirm his conceptual predictions, while an inefficient reader, such as Tim, allows the print to mislead him or to impede his progress. The reader begins to predict on the basis of grammar and meaning. He makes predictions about specifics as well as generalities. He makes predictions about plot and theme and sequence of events. He predicts subsequent grammatical structures and subsequent graphic units. And if he is a proficient reader he makes the best predictions possible for his efforts.

The reader confirms or rejects his predictions. A proficient reader can recognize disruptive mistakes by asking, "Does it sound like language? Does it make sense?" If the reader rejects his predictions he can either go back and gather more cues--or he can press on, alerted to additional contextual cues. Finally, the reader decodes, that is, he integrates the information gained with the meaning which has been forming. This may involve assimilation of new meaning or accommodation of meaning previously decoded, or both (Goodman, 1970).

To clarify the relationship of the reading strategies with the model of reading and with the three subsystems of language, Goodman and Burke have organized a paradigm of reading strategies. This paradigm should be thought of as a broad outline of the reading strategies that children control with varying degrees of proficiency. It is not a developmental and hierarchically arranged catalog of skills that must be tested for and drilled on.

PARADIGM OF READING STRATEGIES

	Predicting	Confirming	Comprehending
Graphophonic	Graphic units Non-English spelling "Eye" dialect	Confirming only when necessary Habitual association	
Syntactic	Bound morphemes Grammatical function Grammatical structure	Disconfirming and correcting Bound morphemes Habitual association Punctuation Dialogue carriers Discriminating significant from insignificant structure	
Semantic	Characterization Setting Style and mode Events Plots Theme Relational words Negatives	Developing meaning through context Disconfirming and correcting Discriminating significant from insignificant information Habitual association	Concepts Plot and theme Humor Subtleties Pathos Motive Propaganda

Y. Goodman
C. Burke

With the model of reading and the paradigm of reading strategies, the teacher has guidelines for obtaining information about the reader and the procedures with which he manages the process of reading. With specific information about the student's degree of facility with language the teacher can develop lessons that are directly significant and immediately applicable to the student's needs. Such lessons have been labeled Reading Strategy Lessons by Goodman and Burke (1972).

> Reading Strategy Lessons are planned reading situations in which . . . reading material and reading situations are arranged to encourage the reader's conscious use of the selected strategy without interfering with the natural and constant interaction among the three language systems involved in reading. (Goodman and Burke, 1972)

As a result of a careful examination of a reader's miscues (deviations from the printed page), especially of his repeated miscues, and the retelling of a story, we can draw some conclusions about a reader's use of language cues. And we can make some specific suggestions concerning his reading instruction.

In order to look at examples of strategy lessons, let's consider some of the familiar problems that teachers see their students struggling with every day. Let's look first at the student who thinks that reading is an exact process and that in order to read one must be able to pronounce each word correctly. For this reader, there must be no deviations from the print, no regressing, and no guessing. These are the readers who would rather work away at a word, sounding-out letter by letter, syllable by syllable and, as a result, losing the flow of the sentence and letting the sense slip away. These kids must be convinced that word-for-word reading is not necessarily a virtue, that we all (because of psycholinguistic involvement) do make miscues. These readers, like Tim, are word-bound and constricted because they think reading is sounding out--staying as close to the print as possible. To strengthen predicting strategies on the basis of sentence structure and meaning, the teacher might read aloud from the child's own book, pausing frequently, allowing the listener to fill in the pauses. Following success with this, the teacher might black-out various words that are highly predictable, and then have the reader guess at the blacked-out words, using sentence structure and meaning as the bases for his guesswork. Readers are often pleasantly surprised when they realize that they can easily manage this activity. They begin to gain confidence when they discover that their substitutions sound right and that they make sense as well. As readers improve their skills, the exercises can be made more difficult. Other cloze procedures (omitting words with specific grammatical functions for which meaning can be easily ascribed, or omitting words at random) could be useful in helping readers anticipate grammatical structure and in developing awareness of

grammatical function. A reader will reduce his omissions of unknown words as he gathers meaning from context. He must make sense of his reading and he must allow the syntax of the sentence to help him make acceptable word-level substitutions. Readers who feel that it is cheating if they substitute their own words for unknown words, may begin to see the possibilities of such a strategy when they try their hand at rewriting paragraphs:

> Yesterday it rained. From time to time there were brilliant flashes of lightning and loud rumbling of thunder. Large balls of hail came down.

One reader rewrote the paragraph as follows:

> Twenty-four hours ago we had some precipitation. Intermittently there were brilliant scintillations of static electricity and intense ruffled reverberations due to the expansion of the air. Massive globules of sedimentary ice came down.

Familiar nursery rhymes are fun to rewrite. Two readers with the help of a dictionary wrote:

> Hickory, Dickory, Dock. The domestic rodent dashes to the top-most part of the time-telling instrument. The time-telling machine gonged the first numeral, the domestic rodent scampered to the bottom part of the time-telling apparatus, Hickory, Dickory, Dock.

With such exercises, readers begin to understand that an idea can be expressed in various ways. They also begin to realize that the author does not say everything; for reading is not passive. The reader has a responsibility for thinking as he is reading, that is, he must bring his thoughts to the author's thoughts.

The retelling of a story, under normal circumstances, should reflect the reader's grasp of characterization and story content. Readers who are only able to recall the names of the characters in a story and a list of events usually have a superficial grasp of the story. It is remarkable that children can operate only at this level and yet appear to have great success in reading. With relatively little guidance, children can move to deeper understandings of theme, plot, and character development.

The following suggestions are made for situations in which children have the opportunity to do a great deal of self-selection from a wide variety of materials.

1. Ask a child to look for a section or several short sections in his reading that have to do with one of the following:

a. The setting
b. Plot introduction
c. Plot development
d. Character development
e. Theme explication

The child reads this section to a small group and the listeners discuss the passage and try to determine what the author wanted to tell his audience.

2. If students dramatize a story, they must think about its meaning and interpret its message. Acting out a story not only provides a means for demonstrating sequence and setting, but calls for character development, interpretation of mood, and grasp of plot and climax. Pantomimes and charades offer a change from the verbal expression and allow children to convey meaning by movement and gesture alone. A reader who understands Harriet in Harriet the Spy can help others see her by pantomiming her with the appropriate body language.

3. By reading aloud to his students the teacher can broaden their literary experience.

> There is always a reason for my book selections. Usually I have in mind at least one of these criteria: a mind-stretching concept, a controversial social issue, a meaningful character, an interesting technique like fantasy, allegory, or humor. (George, 1970)

To build an understanding of plot development the teacher might stop reading at a critical spot and ask the children to finish the story. They will begin to realize that there is a "plot question" and that some endings are plausible within the development of the plot and some are not.

When their repertoire of literature has grown, students can compare two characters, e.g., Tien Pao in The House of Sixty Fathers with Karana in Island of the Blue Dolphins.

Children who fail to grasp the humor in a story might think that books or the act of reading is never related to humor. Perhaps before such children are able to recognize subtle humor, they must first be exposed to the blatant humor of Amelia Bedelia, Yours Till Niagara Falls, Your Own Joke Book, or The Blue-Nosed Witch.

By the same token, readers who have trouble grasping the plot or theme of a story should be exposed to books that have a basic series of actions that move to a logical outcome, and to books that have an explicit central message. Books with clearly developed plots involving a definite problem or conflict with well-defined climaxes are Helter-Skelter by Patricia Moyes, Little House in the Big Woods by Laura Ingalls Wilder, and The Intruder by Arnold Haithwaite.

Books with themes that have to do with the process of growing up usually are of interest to children, and children may be more sensitive to thematic elements in such books. The following titles have strong themes of this kind:

And Now Miguel by Joseph Krumgold

The Secret Garden by Frances H. Burnett

Santiago by Ann Nolan

I'll Get There. It Better Be Worth the Trip by John Donover

References

Britton, J. Language and Learning. Coral Gables, Florida: University of Miami Press, 1970.

George, M. Y. Language Art: An Ideabook. Scranton Pennsylvania: Chandler Publishing Company, 1970.

Goodman, K. S. Behind the Eye: What Happens in Reading. In Goodman and Niles, Reading: Process and Program. Champaign, Illinois: NCTE, 1970.

Goodman, Y. M. and Burke, C. L. Reading Miscue Inventory Manual: Procedure for Diagnosis and Evaluation. New York: Macmillan, 1972.

THE FOLKTALE IS ALIVE AND WELL

Charles Blaney

Although this paper differs radically from the comments presented at the Language Arts Conference, the writer follows the same theme--the folktale is alive and well. The writer will have available early in 1974 an annotated bibliography of recent folktale collections for young people. The third issue of the 1973-1974 volume of the Indiana English Journal will be devoted to literature of the Pacific for Young People. Further information about these may be obtained from the writer.

A spate of articles in professional publications, especially Elementary English, published by the National Council of Teachers of English, remind us that folklore, especially the folktale, is alive and well. These articles suggest as the first important force that teachers recognize the persistent usage of folk literature in their classrooms.

Arthur Allen and Dorothy Seaberg report that participants in an NDEA Institute verified assumptions made in Northrup Frye's The Educated Imagination and Kornic Chukonsky's From Two to Five that "Folk literature and fantastical fiction seem to have the greatest appeal of all types of literary genres for the urban child."[1] William Anderson reports that the "kinship of folktales, especially fairy tales, to the main current of Western literature will play an increasing important role." He develops the idea that if folktales "were taught from the perspective of the whole body of literature [they] could provide the initiation, at whatever level of conceptualization the child is capable of, to the themes, archetypes, conventions, and symbols of the corpus of Western literature."[2] He then discusses "The Sleeping Beauty" to support his position.

"The Three Little Pigs", which Robert Robinson thinks is "a masterpiece, worthy of adult attention and respect," becomes the vehicle for a discussion of various approaches to literary criticism --ethical, historical, psychological, sociological, formal, and archetypal.[3] Sister Mary Agna places primary emphasis on folk tales in the classroom. She

---

Charles Blaney, Department of English, Indiana State University

argues that children need folk tales. "They need to read of happy endings, of daring mischief, and enjoyable entertainment and emotional satisfaction that fairy tales provide so abundantly."[4] And as late as this spring one curriculum handbook includes the comment that "Another trend in teaching literature is to a renewed interest in oral literature. To all students, not only the disadvantaged, teacher readings of myths, fables, and fairy tales provide an important source of aesthetic pleasure."[5]

Another important force in keeping folk literature "alive and well" lies in the area of awards for outstanding books. The Newbery-Caldecott Committee, composed of twenty-three librarians, earlier this year chose three books with folkloristic themes as winning books. A Japanese folktale about a lady who laughs and cooks dumplings and is caught by demons but is able to escape them won the Caldecott Medal, the top award.[6] Randall Jarrell's Snow-White and the Seven Dwarfs[7] and Gerald McDermott's Anansi the Spider, an African folktale,[8] were Caldecott Honor Books. In past years other versions of folktales have won this coveted award.

A third important force that helps to keep the folktale alive and well is the curriculum builder. One of the top examples in this area is the work presented in the Nebraska Curriculum Project for the elementary schools. The curriculum includes units which focus on the study of literature, literature to be orally approached, and language and composition integrated with the study of literature. Units focus on folktales, fanciful stories, animal stories, adventure stories, myths, fables, stories of other lands and people, historical fiction, and biography. Each unit has a core text, or a selection of core texts; sometimes alternatives are suggested. Units are well developed, including the major objectives of the units, a discussion of the "genre" of the works presented, and a discussion of the relationships among units. Articulation among units is suggested:

> For instance, the "fable" units in the first two grades introduce the child to the common devices and patterns of the simplest fables. The literary purposes of those devices and patterns are exhibited by stories in the third grade unit. The fourth grade "fable" unit and the fifth grade unit on the fables of ancient India offer a more intensive, more analytical study of the classical fable form; the series culminates in the sixth grade study of Kenneth Grahame's The Wind in the Willows: the "epic" fable in a humorous, satiric, allegorical representation of the steady and the gross in modern society.[9]

The folktales suggested for the various units include:

> Grade 1: "Little Red Hen", "Three Billy Goats Gruff", and "The Gingerbread Boy"

Grade 2: "Little Red Riding Hood", "Story of the Three Pigs", and "Story of the Three Bears" (The last is not a "true" folktale; Robert Southey is the author.)

Grade 3: "Sleeping Beauty", "Cinderella" or "The Little Glass Slipper", and "Mother Holle" or "The Kind and the Unkind Girl"

Grade 4: "Febold Feboldson" (The stories of Febold Feboldson belong to the realm of "Mass Culture" material. They are not folktales; they are the product of the creative imagination and the pen of a lawyer.)

Grade 5: "Rapunzel", "The Woodcutter's Child", and "The Three Languages" ("Tall Tale America" lies outside the realm of "true" folktales. See item above.)

Grade 6: "The Seven Voyages of Sinbad" (Chances are the ones used are literary versions.)

The choice of tales represents the purposes of the curriculum builders. Cultures from which the tales come and the modes in which they are presented are varied. The common source of characteristics is the selections' common origin in "the body of folk traditions."

> The first grade unit concentrates on the oral and repetitive features of the folk tale; the second grade unit exhibits common plot patterns in a series of stories; and the third grade unit introduces the student to the magical world of fairy-land and reviews the common structural motifs of folk literature; the fourth grade unit and one fifth grade unit examine the tall tale, the most typical form of American folk literature. The other fifth grade unit on folk tales builds upon the knowledge of all those units to begin an investigation of the symbolic and allegorical meanings that the devices common to all folk literature tend to express. The stories become more rewarding as they become more complex.[10]

A more recent literature series, Literature: Uses of the Imagination, includes much material from the realms of myth and folktale. Northrup Frye points out that "literature . . . has continually to turn to the primitive, to ballad and popular song and folk tale, to find the sources of its own vitality . . . ."[11] Although this program is not designed for the elementary school, it does provide books for levels seven and eight, which are still included in many elementary schools.

A last force that must be mentioned is the publisher who continues to produce book after book of folktales, myths, and legends. A listing of books published the last few years would indicate hundreds of books covering cultures and countries around the world. Of special interest to the writer is the Pacific area, including the cultural groups of

Polynesia, Melanesia, and Micronesia and the western rim of the Pacific, Japan, Korea, and China. Hawaiian Myths of Earth, Sea, and Sky, Hawaiian Legends of Tricksters and Riddlers, Tales of Maui, The Magic Banana, etc. are representatives of the islands. Three Tales of Monkey, Ancient Folk Tales from the Far East, Favorite Children's Stories from China and Tibet, The Dancing Kettle and other Japanese Folk Tales, and Ven Tales of Japan are representative of East Asian tales for young people. One could do the same for other countries and cultures.

Much more could be said on the subject, but time does not permit. The books of folktales, legends, and myths are available for both the teacher to use and children to enjoy. My plea is for teachers to become acquainted with folktales and methods of using the folktales with the children in their classes. In doing so, teachers should select the outstanding editions available.

NOTES

[1]Arthur T. Allen and Dorothy I. Seaberg, "Toward a Rationale for Teaching Literature to Children," Elementary English, XLV (March 1968), 1043.

[2]William Anderson, "Fairy Tales and the Elementary Curriculum or 'The Sleeping Beauty' Reawakened," Elementary English, XLVI (May 1969), 563.

[3]Robert D. Robinson, "The Three Little Pigs: From Six Directions," Elementary English, XLV (March 1968), 356.

[4]Sister Mary Agna, "Primary Emphasis on Fairy Tales," Elementary English, XLV (March 1968), 952.

[5]American Association of School Administrators, Curriculum Handbook for School Executives (1973), p. 119.

[6]Arlene Masil, The Funny Little Woman (New York: Dutton, 1972).

[7]Randall Jarrell, Snow-White and the Seven Dwarfs (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux), 1972.

[8]Gerald McDermott, Anansi the Spider (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1972).

[9]Nebraska Curriculum Development Center, A Curriculum for English, I (University of Nebraska Press, 1966), p. x.

[10]Ibid, p. xiii.

[11]Northrup Frye, On Teaching Literature (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1972), p. 7.

SOME THOUGHTS ON EARLY LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Diane Brown

The intent of this article is to share some significant conceptions about environmental opportunities that will contribute toward developing a more fully functioning human being. Specifically, the major concern here is with the development of language and its relatedness as an important, if not the most important, factor contributing to the growth of a person.

When the infant facilitates the birth cry, he has entered the world of language. The moment he comes in external contact with his mother, he has entered the human relationship that many researchers and practitioners of child development support as being the most crucial to his entire development. The relationships with "significant others" such as extended family and friends will also be crucial to the human learning condition. Recent research by Brookover and his associates shows that self-concept of academic ability is significantly correlated with school achievement. Self-concepts account for a significant portion of achievement independent of measured intelligence, socio-economic status, educational aspirations, and the expectations of friends and teachers.[1]

Assume that the infant has long been anticipated with joy and great desire by his family. Mother is anxiously waiting for the days in the maternity ward to speed by and she and father can take this precious bundle home to the waiting grandparents, extended family, friends, et al.--plus the meticulously prepared nursery. As the infant enters his new world at home, his unfocused eyes glibly try to follow this environment of warmth and security. Mother coos and babbles and warmly holds the child as she bathes, feeds and diapers him. As he matures, she adapts her orientation to him so that always he is being encouraged to mature and develop at a normal rate. She enjoys each stage and age and does not pressure him to go beyond his capabilities. Like the Oglala Sioux Indian Mother, she labels objects and chats in a fun give-and-take way as the child and she live out the phenomenon of growth through work and play. The father is also very much a part of the child's development. He engages in helping with the needs of the child as well as playing with the baby in his own special fatherly way.

A case study so poignant in meaning occurred about 2,000 years ago. A child, predicted and anticipated for years, arrives in a tiny village in Israel. Kings bow down to him. The rich worship him. The learned

---

Diane Brown, Laboratory School, Indiana State University

inquire of him. No child and mother have been so portrayed in maternal adoration by artists of many cultures. His earthly father unselfishly seeks to bring the family security and a comfortable home. The young child is included in the father's business by helping in the carpenter shop. Here was meaningful work for a child that added to his sense of belonging and being needed. As the child grows in the security of this family and environment, his basic needs for shelter, food and love are met. But his need for wisdom is insatiable. We find him in the temples . . . the seat of the erudite. He is an incurable learner. As an adult, he is humble, wise, free to give of himself to others, non-defensive--yet able to stand for his own beliefs. The final statement of love and enduring maternal warmth seems to be culminated in Michelangelo's sculpture, the "Pieta." Even in death the mother holds her son in her arms.

Contrast this with Tommy who comes to school after hiding and sleeping in a clothes closet, having found this niche after hearing hours of quarreling and bickering between his parents. Dad lost his job yesterday and arrived home quite inebriated. This morning Tommy's mother left for her work before daylight. Dad was still sleeping off last night's drinking. There were two chocolate donuts and a Pepsi for breakfast and now Tommy finds himself in the classroom. He is still in a state of bewilderment as to his parents' quarreling and . . . the teacher wants Tommy to be the "Blue Fairy."

Five basic needs are identified by Maslow in hierarchical order. He proceeds from the most potent to the least potent in that each must be met to some degree of satisfaction before the organism strives toward the next highest order. They are:

1. the physiological needs, i.e., hunger and thirst
2. the safety needs
3. the love and belongingness needs
4. the esteem needs
5. the self actualization needs, i.e., the desire for self-fulfilment, for becoming what one has the potential to become.[2]

If the young child uses most or all of his energy in level one and level two activities, there is little remaining to be utilized in the development of language skills beyond those required for survival needs. Far too many persons appear to spend most of their entire lives at level two. Maslow's hierarchy of needs must be understood by the teacher in terms of the children with whom she learns. Parental warmth and reinforcement and especially mother warmth must be present for a child to begin and broaden his quest for cognitive learning, emotional well-being and physical development as described.[3]

As a four year old, I was abruptly left in the home of my grandmother on a warm night in October, 1939. Up to that date I had no knowledge of the approaching birth of a sibling. When my father returned to my grandmother and me much later that day, I had a brother. In the next several days the need for my mother was felt and expressed in many ways. Some were overt. The overt behaviors were more apparent. When my grandmother rocked me in the old rocking chair, I could hear her tummy growling and it was repulsive to me. I reached up to touch the familiar silky black hair of my mother and was met with a coarse, taut, braided bun. Although she tried to reassure me, her voice was not soothing and lilting and she didn't smell like my mother, either. By the second day I couldn't eat, was constipated, had begun bed-wetting and cried incessantly. My point is that there was shelter, food and familiar people, but not my mother. A real regression in all areas of growth was evidenced for weeks after my mother's return. I still remember this threatening period in my life.

We have children in the classroom living in the world of reality with its complex phenomena. What is happening to whom? Now? Last year?, etc. We may conclude this idea of family influence by using a quote from Cole S. Brembeck,

> In shaping the early and continuing values, aspirations, achievements, and behavior of the child, the family is without equal. For this reason the schools must recognize and understand the family as a teaching institution. The purposes of school are so intertwined with the purposes of the family that one cannot be achieved apart from the other. The school must always set as one of its goals discovery of ways to work with families for the maximum benefit of the object of both, the child.[4]

The development of the child's language and thinking are directly related to all the causal factors in the environment. The teacher strives to understand the backgrounds and influences that affect the learner and thus increase her effectiveness in working with the child.

At some point in time we believed that children arrived in the world with an intelligence quotient so stationary that the devil himself had no effect. The "predeterminism" idea gave the adult the opportunity to get off the hook by rationalizing that "that's the way he is and I can't do anything about it." J. McVicker Hunt and his studies of institutionalized children who became delayed in development--some even dying due to lack of emotional support and stimulation--showed us that intelligence is not fixed. Through environmental manipulation and stimulation and supportive, warm, empathic adults, we can increase and bring to fuller flower human potential.[5] Language has a command over the reality of what we know and act upon. Joseph Church gives us much to deal with in understanding the concept. For example, a child hears the word <u>hop</u>, he says the word and finally associates it with the

locomotor activity of hopping. He now says hop and hops with his physical body. He uses language to control his behavior and adds a new skill to his learning repertoire. Mind and body are beginning to work together as a unit. He can begin to manipulate himself in his environment.[6]

With children who exhibit poor motor skills, we may find problems in language. The brain is not sending out language that will ultimately tell the body what to do. Somewhere language is delayed and with this delay there will be underdevelopment of other skills including motor skills.

Some "acting out" behavior as described by A. R. Luria is an inability on the part of the child to be in control of his physical self. (One would need to but walk in the shoes of the person with cerebral palsy to get a feeling for this overwhelming anxiety and its consequences for learning and behavior.) When the normally developing child begins to program his behavior through language, he is actually telling himself what to do. He now gains control and reinforces himself as a growing person.[7]

Our expectations for children's verbal and motor behavior will of course coincide with what is normal for the age/stage of the child. However, when the child reaches school age (kindergarten-first grade), we keep constantly aware of the multiple areas of development, and if there seems to be a problem in any area, the teacher must use her resources to explore all possible clues to the problem. Language acquisition does have much control over other areas of the child's development, and conversely language is controlled or modified by variables existing in the child's development and life space.

Children learn language through a process of coding and sorting and over-generalizing, eventually refining language into adult language patterns. Researchers agree we do not know or completely understand exactly how language is acquired. Imitation, as Courtney Cazden describes it, is not enough to explain the entire learning process. That is, children don't learn language just by "parroting" words. Grammar and syntax are acquired through using and refining language. Models (adults) are important though. A mother who uses a soft, sometimes empathic, interesting voice with good standard English speech patterns usually has a child with language acuity and similar qualities and characteristics of speech.[8]

Language is emotionally charged and so the child who heard his father bitter, angry and hostile may withdraw from use of language since it is not a pleasant device. The other extreme of behavior is for the same child to model father's behavior and internalize the hostility and aggressiveness and express it through language.

James Hymes is dedicated to the theory of motivation and learning. Language and the thinking-learning process must evolve from stimulation and experience of high motivation to the child.[9] A child who became a problem at school and home and who was causing his parents unlimited worries, became more nearly a fully functioning person when the decision was made to let him buy a car. The child purchased his 1956 Dodge station wagon for $10.00 and proceeded to re-upholster, re-paint and renovate the auto. His monetary stature increased as he sold parts from his car. Resulting overt behaviors were a happier boy, increased communication with parents and peers, and a new motivation for school and learning. We can't all have a Dodge station wagon in our classroom, but we had better be sure to have materials and resources that motivate children to their greatest potential.

The teacher recognizes children in the classroom as functioning at their highest levels when they feel good about themselves. Self-concept has perhaps become an over-worked word. But Don Hamachek and other experts in child growth and development tend to agree that when one does not feel good about oneself from age 0 to 99, one cannot function or learn to one's potential.[10] I remember my experience in first grade of being sent to school with tight sausage curls. My best friend "made fun" and I thought of little else but my ugly hair. Learning de-escalates when the child is threatened or made to feel inferior. "In children of all ages stability of the self-image derives both from pragmatic feedback and from the regard of other people."[11]

Children know at an early age their differences, their shortcomings, their inabilities. We don't have to tell them! The child who cannot fold her rest mat does not need to be told by the teacher that she is always last in finishing the job. It may come as a surprise to that teacher when the diagnostician's report says the child's visual perceptions and/or motor skills, etc., are delayed and/or impaired.

Speech and language development is certainly a process of elicitation by the adult. The child hears others speak and this elicits speech from the child. Since language is an innate ability, this theory stands to reason. Just listen to a mother cooing and babbling to her infant. The response to her is returned cooing and babbling and the joy of communication. The children that I observed in a German orphanage where there was no one to elicit the language of the infant were indeed objects of humanity already solidified at a certain point in development. No wonder I saw almost no evidence of laughter, babbling or motor activity. The empathic, eliciting adult helps the child on his way to his own learning and his own identity. The adult understands and uses many modes of communication for that is how most humans interact. Gestures, non-verbal communication and cues, affection and verbalization are a part of the learned communication system. "Everything that comes to a child's mill is grist if it is not mixed with so much chaff of adult interference that he cannot grasp the details."[12]

The parent and the teacher are empathic and accepting; yet they always have expectations for the child. The parent who elicits and expects communication usually gets it.

Sometimes, as teachers and parents, we assume that children understand all that we are attempting to convey. This is not always true, for children can manipulate and use more language than they understand. This has implications for teaching and learning. For example, the mother who says in one breath, "Put your wet socks on the dryer, your shoes in the closet, draw your bathwater, put your clothes on the hamper and use the aqua towel," may be amazed to see Sally sitting on the bottom step fifteen minutes later in her wet shoes with her head hung low. Obviously, this mother has overloaded this child's receiver with requests that might very well stagger most adults!

The following ideas may serve as guidelines in working with young children in the area of language development. Louise Bender Scott gives support for these concepts.

The teacher helps the child by keeping the doors of communication open to the people in his environment. This includes parents. Some parents will only need the opportunity to be welcomed at school, and they will act and be open to the learning environment. Other parents may need long-term encouragement and reinforcement in seeing the school as positive and non-threatening. Ultimately the teacher's goal is to work closely with all parents to facilitate the most creative and finest growth potential for each child.

The teacher considers carefully the backgrounds and kinds of early learning experiences each child has been subjected to. She knows that warm, understanding child-rearing practices usually produce a child with a positive self-concept and therefore a greater potential for absorbing the cognitive and affective world.

Children meet most of their needs through language. When children are limited in their ability (for a various number of reasons), they become anxiety ridden and frustrated. The teacher's role involves spending some time on a one-to-one relationship, giving children trust and the time and place for positive communication.

The teacher keeps the following as priorities in teaching:

She gives the child emotional and physical support.

She allows for talking and communications activities in a happy, relaxed atmosphere.

She provides a curriculum that affords experiences and activities that each child at one time or another can identify with, become excited about, and feel <u>good</u> about.

She encourages each child to use his speech and to stretch his cognitive domain through speech usage.

She uses positive regard as she works with each child's attempts in the world of communication and understanding.

She sees each attempt as a positive effort and does not pressure children. She tries to understand each step of progress and be ready to offer appropriate challenges to the child as he "leaps forward" in his discoveries.

We recognize that speech acuity can be improved through aural stimulation. A variety of stories, poems and speech-influenced games can be selected as facilitators of speech.

Children must be loved and feel loved to become fully functioning persons. The pre-school teacher is ready and willing to give and thus to receive love, in that order.[13]

An attitude and social climate of positive regard for people, especially little people, of liking them and valuing them for who they are and where they are in their development is a top priority for language development.

A healthy self-concept oriented toward learning develops in a social climate of maximum freedom of language usage. As the teacher builds the curriculum and an aesthetic environment for the child, she does this knowing that such an atmosphere facilitates the child's becoming aware of himself as a human being and special person. His self-esteem and integrity are valued and respected by the significant other in his life space, namely, the teacher. Thus, his energy is available for language growth.

NOTES

[1]Wilbur B. Brookover and Edsel L. Erickson, Society, Schools and Learning (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1969), p. 105.

[2]Abraham Maslow, Encounters With the Self, ed. Don E. Hamachek (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), pp. 55-58.

[3]Ilse Mattick, "The Teacher's Role In Helping Young Children Develop Language Competence," Young Children 27 (February, 1972), 133-142.

[4]Cole S. Brembeck, Social Foundations of Education (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1966), p. 148.

[5]J. McVicker Hunt, "How Children Develop Intellectually," Children II (1964), 1-11.

[6]Joseph Church, Language and the Discovery of Reality (New York: Random House, 1961), pp. 95-97.

[7]Alexander R. Luria, Speech and the Regulation of Behavior (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 1961).

[8]Courtney Cazden, ed., Language In Early Childhood Education (Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1972), pp. 3-34.

[9]James E. Hymes, Jr., Teaching The Child Under Six (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1968).

[10]Don E. Hamachek, ed., The Self In Growth Teaching and Learning (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965).

[11]Church, op. cit., p. 103.

[12]Ilse Forest, Early Years at School (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1949), p. 280.

[13]Louise Bender Scott, Learning Time With Language Experiences (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Webster Div., 1968), pp. 1-59.

THE PLAY'S THE THING

Eva Chipper

I know you all have read those marvelous ambitious "desired outcomes" of your program which your curriculum guide lists. "Pupils should develop a sense of values which will produce desirable behavior patterns" or "Pupils should develop desirable character traits through reading about people with high moral character." How devastating it must be to discover after working with children that these goals must have been written by people who either had never been inside a classroom or had completely forgotten how lively youngsters act, re-act, and learn.

However, there are a few important guidelines which will help us to understand the way children learn. Children need to have confidence in themselves. All children need to be involved in the daily activities of a classroom and should not be left out because of their lack of competence in some academic field. They must be given opportunities for cooperation. They must be given a chance to realize that errors are part of the learning process. Demands teachers make on them should be reasonable and should vary according to their ability. Every child should be successful at something.

These goals may sound just as cliché-ridden as the first ones I mentioned and may be as difficult to obtain, but there are activities one can choose to get a little closer to these "desired outcomes." Unfortunately there is no foolproof recipe or miracle ingredient which will automatically ensure that each child is motivated to become a competent human being and have (check your curriculum guide) "appreciation for the beautiful in both thought and expression." After you have read some of the graffiti in our coat hall, you might be thankful that at least the spelling of the "bad words" is correct.

We have had many reformers in the last years and understandably so--we have had so many failures. We do not need constant re-evaluation of the way we go about teaching our children. However, many of the so-called failures have been due to unreasonable expectations of what the schools can do.

Reformers always get trapped into claiming too much for what they propose and I will have to be careful to avoid that pitfall when I will demonstrate to you how I use creative dramatics. My experience with this technique started when my principal asked me to put on a program

---

Eva Chipper, Laboratory School, Indiana State University

with some first-grade children. I was determined that the show should be fun for the children and the audience--not one of those painful experiences only a mother can love.

We all know that children need verbal skills and will acquire them if given half a chance. Verbal ability is vital to almost any sort of intellectual attainment. It is interesting to note that colleges have found that of all the tests they use to predict college performance, verbal ability is the most reliable--much more so than subject matter tests.

Creative dramatics is a way of learning which appeals to children and is a valuable tool for improving language power and verbal skills. The child will overcome his timidity if given an opportunity to function as part of a group. Dialogue is never memorized so that portraying a character gives a child the opportunity to express strong feelings in socially acceptable ways. Plays change and grow with each performance. The parts are not forced. Attention can be given to correcting speed and voice. I should mention that to be effective with this program you must have a class of a size that can be well managed (never more than 28 children) and have some time off for intellectual and emotional relief. It also helps if you have assistance in preparing material since every child gets a poem book with the poems we do in a program. However, these conditions should prevail whether you do any special programs or not.

It's fun to perform for an audience. We have given plays for college classes, school convocations, convalescent homes, the public library, and many other interesting places.

I will try to show you through slides, films and actual recordings of the children's voices the kind of poems and stories that are appealing. You will see that the costumes are simple and can all be made by the children. Our plays usually have an introduction--sort of a play within a play. The children introduce themselves in different ways and they usually think up some way to end the play.

I am sure that at times your children will not show "mutual respect in the interchange of ideas" or "a sense of pleasure in sharing ideas," but if you meet someone who was in your room years ago who tells you that he or she still remembers the plays we did and that he still has the books of poems you gave him, you will know that it was all worth it.

"A SPOONFUL OF SUGAR"

Millie Ann Vaughn

As a remedial reading teacher, I have discovered a dreadful "disease" that many of my remedial students have. It is not a physical disease. It has been around for many years and as reading teachers and teachers of reading, we will face this "disease" in our classrooms each day that we teach. Some companies selling books or machines claim a cure-all for the "disease," but there isn't one--yet it can be cured. Children who have it display certain symptoms. Let me give you some of the symptoms. You be thinking of your own students as I give them . . . maybe some of your students have this "disease" too. Can you think of children in your class who are or have been tired, listless, and inattentive when it's time to read? Or do you know children who are loud, boisterous, attention-getters, and procrastinators when it's time to read? After studying these symptoms, I have diagnosed the "disease" as "Gastro-encephelo-readingo-ritis" my $10.00 nonsense word for the "disease" called "Sick of Reading"! If "Sick of Reading" is left untreated, it becomes "Sick of School." If "Sick of School" is let go, the "disease" becomes very complicated and runs into the "I Hates" disease. I'm sure you know the "I Hates!" The child exclaims, "I Hate Reading!" "I Hate Math!" "I Hate School!" "I Hate You!" Finally after everything is compounded the child screams out in so many different ways, "I HATE ME!" Jane told me last year, "Miss Vaughn, I'm no good! My teacher doesn't like me. She never calls on me. I make bad grades. I'm just no good!" Jane had the "I Hates." Rod had the "I Hates" too. He would write all over himself and his clothes as well as on his tennis shoes. He had a very poor self concept. Some very severe cases I've known have hated themselves so badly that they have even cut on their warts for attention! Some have such bad behavior that they like to inflict pain on themselves, and their teachers have to inflict pain also -- on a strategic spot since they are so obnoxious.

As a reading teacher, I try to "doctor up" what ails children in reading (and in life) and at least try to remedy "Gastro-encephelo-readingo-ritis" and the "I Hates." Often I administer vitamin P, the Phonics vitamin, because it is so very important in helping children to become independent readers. Today, however, I will discuss another vitamin which I call vitamin O.L.$_3$. The O.L. stands for Oral Language, and the 3 stands for the three different types of Oral Language. I feel O.L.$_3$ fights the "blahs" like Alka Seltzer can't! It's the quick picker-upper that kids often need.

Millie Ann Vaughn, Project READ, Vigo County School Corporation, Terre Haute, Indiana

Let's begin with the first type of Oral Language which I call BEAUTIFUL LANGUAGE. Some language is so lovely that you may get a tear in your eye or a lump in your throat because it is so beautiful. Language is beautiful to each of us because of our own life style, experiences, etc. What is beautiful to one person may not be beautiful to another due to our different lives and experiences. We identify ourselves and our experiences with the characters in books and with what the characters do and say. I feel that sometimes characters from books can say meaningful things to children in a way that makes children really think--like no didactic lesson in class could do. One friend of mine says that she has difficulty reading the story "The Selfish Giant" to her children since she gets the lump and the tears. To her, the story is really beautiful and meaningful. I feel that it is meaningful to children if they see that teachers react to language--that they are moved by lovely and meaningful words. I'd like to share a few things which I feel are representatives of beautiful language. [Examples included "Knots on the Counting Rope," "Crow Boy," and Laura Wilder Books.]

The second variety of the Oral Language vitamin is SWINGY LANGUAGE. [Began with poem "Ten Little Squirrels" with participation from audience.] Children love to say poetry in rhythm and enjoy giving mini-plays involving the whole class as we did with the "Ten Little Squirrels." You might ask me, "Is there a justification for using swingy language in a remedial setting?" My answer is "Yes." Swingy language is natural. It is as natural as breathing out and breathing in for children. They enjoy playing with language and entertaining themselves with it. Last summer I was studying on my front porch, and I began to listen to the three little girls next door. They were amusing themselves in the front year with no supervision. They were about three to five years old. They sang:

Ring around the rosey,
Pocketful of posey,
Ashes! Ashes!
All fall D-O-W-N!

They were having a ball with this natural swingy language. Later as children get older, especially the girls, they get the jump rope and chant in the rhythm of the swingy rope:

Down in the valley where the green grass grows,
There sat Mary as sweet as a rose,
She sang, she sang, she sang so sweet,
When along came Johnny and kissed her on the cheek.
How many kisses did she get that week?

This is natural swingy language. At the very end of this school year, I was sitting at my desk. The bell had rung. Suddenly I heard a large group of children outside chanting a really swingy street rhyme. I jumped up, ran to the window, and called to one of the kids I recognized.

I yelled, "Patty, would you tell all your friends to come back tomorrow evening and let me record your rhyme?" She was just delighted and yelled back, "Are you really serious?" I assured her that I was. The next evening a mob of kids gathered to record a street rhyme "When Billy Boy was one . . . ." [Tape] This too was natural swingy language.

If I am going to talk about swingy language, I couldn't pass up the little book and record called "Over in the Meadow." It really swings! One little boy told me that a part of this record was the "kind of music you could . . . get drunk by!" [Tape]

Swingy language doesn't have to be drilled into children. It just comes spontaneously. One of my groups loved the swingy language in the story:

Tiki tiki tembo
No sa rembo
Chari bari ruchi
Pip perri pembo

This group wasn't told, "Let's say it together," they just say it automatically because it's fun and it's natural swingy language.

Second graders giving a little mini play for their classmates this past year enjoyed saying together recurring words in a story about Susie the Seal. She went, "Flippety Flop, Flippety Flop, Flippety Flop!" I didn't tell them to say it together; they just did! Their little eyes lit up and big smiles came as they looked at each other and said it rhythmically together. The same children seemed to have fun saying one word in the story. The seal in the bathtub went "Spla-shhhh, spla-shhhh, spla-shhhhh!" When we presented our mini play to the class, the same phrases caught the attention of the others in the class. This illustrates that language is natural and swingy.

So far everything I have said has just been from "Millie and her Kids." It's rather nice to hear an expert say this same thing in a different way. Listen to a part of the "Happy Hippopotomus" which really swings and then hear Bill Martin say a few words on swingy language.

Finally we come to the third variety of the Oral Language vitamin, that of FUNNY LANGUAGE. Our children from target areas come to school with a lot of "dark mountains" as we discussed in the story "Knots of the Counting Rope," but they are like Ed Wynn who used to sing, "I love to laugh!" Ha Ha Ha Ha. Children love to laugh. It's a real tonic for the soul. So we should help children see that language can really be funny. The following are a few examples of what I mean. I am a Hee Haw fan and so are some of my children. Last year one little boy came into class one morning and said, "Miss Vaughn, did you see Archie on Hee Haw last night tell that silly story about Rindercella?" I replied, "Yes, Ed, I saw it and you know that the storal of the mory

is this: If you want to meet a prandsome hince at a bancy fall and lall in fove, don't forget to slop your dripper!" This really did cause a Hee Haw! We discussed Rindercella and the Pree Little Thrigs. I showed the class how you transpose the consonants to get Rindercella. We decided to transpose the consonants in our names so that I would be Viss Maughn instead of Miss Vaughn. Later I found a poem similar to Rindercella. I copied it, drew the picture that went with it, and made it into a bulletin board. This was the poem:

Once a big molicepan
Saw a bittle lum
Sitting on a sturbcone
Chewing gubble bum
"Hi," said the molicepan
"Better simmie gone!"
"Tot on your nintype,"
said the bittle lum.

The poem was received very enthusiatically with "Say it again!" We said it together and analyzed it. Later still I found a whole page of "Spoonerisms" which everybody enjoyed. Examples were: "It is kistomary to cuss the bride." "He received a blushing crow." In additions to hearing Spoonerisms, kids like to read scrambled up proverbs aloud. They really can sound pretty silly!

Another kind of funny language is riddles and jokes. Never forget them. They involve comprehension skills since the child must read and understand the joke such as, "What did the cat get when he crossed the desert?" Answer "Sandy Claws"

Funny language can be tongue twisters such as: Rubber baby buggy bumpers; A rat ran over the roof of the house with a piece of raw liver in his mouth; How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?; Did you ever see a possum in a paw paw patch pickin up paw paws puttin em in his pocket?; Fuzzy Wuzzy was a bear, Fuzzy Wuzzy had no hair, Fuzzy Wuzzy wasn't fuzzy was he?

Funny Language can also be silly poetry. I'll close with my favorite silly poem by Ogden Nash:

A panther is much
like a leopard,
Except it hasn't been peppered.
If you should see a
panther crouch,
Prepare to say ouch!
Better yet -- if called
by a panther ----
D-O-N-'T anther!!

This gives us then our prescription for vitamin O. L.3, Oral Language in three varieties -- BEAUTIFUL LANGUAGE, SWINGY LANGUAGE, and FUNNY LANGUAGE. This may just be the prescription that will help fight "Gastro-encephelo-readingo-ritis" and the "I Hates." I must give you the dosage before we close. Administer this prescription with one part knowledge of the problem, one part patience, one part understanding, and oh . . . you know what the Purina Dog Chow Man says, "Don't forget to add the love." Reading can be a very bitter pill for those boys and girls who are so sick of reading, but you try some of these prescriptions I have given today and add lots of yourself and your own creativity and remember, "Just a spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down . . . in the most delightful way."

MONITORING CHILDREN'S READING BEHAVIOR

Lucille Guckes

This conference session involved audience participation in preparing questions based on the Reading Monitoring Record in recording and analyzing a videotaped reading discussion.

The diagnostic teaching of reading does not end as the teacher identifies a student's reading proficiency levels and his specific skill abilities and needs. This is only the beginning. The teacher must also follow the child's changing needs and growing skills. Thus, the evaluation of a child's reading progress becomes an on-going activity, a continuous diagnosis. But how does the classroom teacher accomplish this task? How can she monitor the individual progress of thirty different children?

Monitoring a child's reading progress continuously does not mean using most of the daily instructional time giving tests. Teachers often recognize and note obvious reading difficulties as they occur both during group and individual activities and as the child works with specific skill tasks. These signals should be recorded on the child's individual record but these bits and pieces do not provide an adequate picture of the child's performance. Thus it is vitally important that the teacher have some means of securing a balanced picture of each child's reading skills periodically, without using a disproportionate amount of the instructional time for assessment.

A child's reading growth can be monitored by making systematic observations of one child at a time during the regular classroom activities. This can be done during conference periods, for those using individualized reading programs, or as a part of the small-group reading activity. By observing the performance of from one to three children each day, the teacher can sample each child's reading behavior monthly or even more frequently. Then by incorporating the day-to-day notes with this guided observation the teacher will have the information needed to adapt classroom learning experiences to each child's changing needs.

An important aspect of this systematic observation is a means of recording these periodic observations. The Reading Monitoring Record,

---

Lucille Guckes, Department of Elementary Education, Indiana State University

Chart 1, has been prepared not only to record each child's performance but also to guide the teacher in utilizing her own questioning strategies. The items listed act as a reminder of the many specific skills involved in reading comprehension as well as providing an organized and convenient form for recording and preserving information about a child's reading abilities and needs.

The first portion of the record, Section I, deals with the child's use of word recognition skills. Under the heading, Examiner Supplied Words, the teacher will record those words she pronounces for the child during either the silent reading or oral rereading segments of a guided lesson or as a child reads selected portions during the individualized reading conference. As Miscues the teacher records any mispronunciations or substitutions made during the oral rereading period followed by the correct word in parentheses. Notations concerning the child's use of context clues in decoding unfamiliar words or in correcting miscues are also made. Section II directs attention to fluency as an indicator of the child's ability to read smoothly and effectively.

Section III of the Record considers the child's use of comprehension skills. This outline provides guidance for the teacher in determining how well the child can perform the following reading tasks: organizing the information from the story, interpreting the author's meaning, extending ideas and predicting outcomes, making critical judgments about the story, and using key vocabulary words in a meaningful manner. Questions concerning the main idea and supporting details and the relationships among these ideas (Items 1, 2, 3, 4) all provide clues to the child's ability to identify and organize the ideas contained in the printed material he reads.

The child's ability to secure meaning from his reading will be assessed as he is asked to make inferences and draw conclusions from what he has read (Items 6, 7). In other words, can the child perceive the author's total message as he "reads between the lines"? Further evaluation concerning the child's ability to interpret what he has read is made as he is asked to predict convergent or divergent outcomes based on the inferences and conclusions he has made. Questions to assess convergent outcomes would require children to predict the most likely contingencies (Item 8) while other questions would be phrased to elicit divergent predictions based on the story and the child's background experiences (Item 9). Then, as the child relates episodes from the story to his background experiences, his ability to evaluate what he has read is sampled by asking him to make judgments about the validity and purpose of the story. (Items 10, 11).

In preparing the Monitoring Record, general questions or question stems have been suggested for the teacher. These questions form the basis of the teacher's planning for the comprehension discussion by the total group after silent reading or may be used as guidelines in discussing the many books read by a child in an individualized program.

CHART 1: READING MONITORING RECORD

NAME_____ BOOK_____ DATE_____

I. Decoding

A. (Make a list of words supplied during silent reading or while student reads orally. Also record miscues and the correct word during oral reading.)

Teacher Pronounced Words	Miscues Substituted or mispronounced word - (correct word)

B. Examples of the child's use or nonuse of context clues to decode an unknown word.

II. Fluency Child reads with expression____, word by word____, runs on____

III. Comprehension

Main Idea	1. What would be a good title for this story? Why? What seems to be the main idea of this paragraph?	_____
Details	2. Use questions to relate to and support the main idea questions. Who . . . . . .? What . . . . . .? When . . . . . .? Where . . . . . .?	_____ _____ _____ _____
Organization	3. Into how many parts could this story be divided? What are they? Why would you divide it that way?	_____
Sequence	4. Which part would be first, second, etc?	_____
Cause/Effect	5. What will happen now that . .(cause) . . . ? Why did . . (effect) . . happen?	_____
Inference	6. Why do you think . . . . . ?	_____
Drawing Conclusions	7. What is . . (character's). . problem in this story?	_____
Predicting or Changing Outcomes	8. What might happen next?	_____
	9. How could this story have ended differently?	_____
Relating to Past Experiences	10. Have you ever noticed if . . . . . ?	_____
	11. Tell me . . . . . ?	_____
Vocabulary	12. What is a . . . . . ?	_____
	13. What does . . . . mean in this story? Does it have other meanings? Give examples.	_____

As a result, this outline becomes a guide for the teacher's instructional activity as well as a tool for assessing the strengths and needs of an individual child.

In preparing questions it takes much thought to formulate questions which will call for the practice of a specific comprehension skill. Yet these questions are the teacher's basic tool in guiding children's practice of these comprehension skills. Unless questions are carefully planned, children may practice only one or two thinking-comprehension skills during the total instructional period. As an illustration consider these two sets of questions:

SET A

What did Pete keep in the cove?
Who helped Pete fix up the boat?
What did Pete's dad tell him about the Indians who lived there long ago?
What did Pete think had caused his boat to go to the river bank?
What did Pete's parents say when he went home and said an Indian had saved him?
What did Pete's mother say had saved him?
Who said they wished Pete's dad had never told him about the Indians?

SET B

How did Pete's boat happen to go into the big river?
Why couldn't anyone hear Pete when he called for help?
What kind of danger was Pete in?
Why do you think Pete's dad was on the trail to the cove?
Why didn't Pete's mother think an Indian had saved him?
What do you think saved Pete? Why do you think that?
Pete's dad smiled and winked at him when Pete's mom said the wind saved him. Why do you think he did that? What did he mean?
What do you think Pete did the next day?
What do you think Pete will find when he goes back to the cave?
How could the story have ended differently?
How could you divide this story into parts? What would you name each part? Why would you give the parts those names?
In what order would those parts happen?

Although the questions in Set A bring out the main events of the story, a student practices only the skills of identifying and remembering the information contained in the story during a discussion using these questions. On the other hand, discussions based on the questions in Set B will give a child an opportunity to practice organizing details and main ideas, making inferences, and applying his own background experiences as he interprets and evaluates what he has read.

In using the record as an assessment tool, do not attempt to direct a question in every category to the child who is being observed. During the first sampling of a child's reading behavior his responses to those questions which involved him during the discussion would be noted as adequate (+) or as omitted or inadequate (-). Upon completion of the activity a few minutes to make additional notes will provide the information needed for the instructional planning and future assessment of this child. During subsequent samplings of this child's performance, questions from those comprehension categories which had not been sampled previously or where an additional look is indicated would be directed to the child being observed. In this manner the teacher will continuously add to the total picture of the child's reading performance and will be better prepared to adapt the child's learning experiences to his changing abilities and needs.

However, the task of monitoring a child's reading growth does not end as the teacher records the information obtained during the observation. A child's responses must be analyzed to plan for his subsequent learning experiences. Patterns found in the words a child missed or did not know will point out word recognition skills he needs to practice. The list in Section I might indicate that the child needs to study basic sight words or he may have difficulty identifying derivitives of words already in his sight vocabulary. Or the child may use word analysis skills to approximate the sound of the word but the word carries no meaning for him: it is not in his receptive vocabulary. Each of these patterns will call for instruction in a different set of word recognition skills.

Furthermore, an examination of the words substituted by the child as well as the notes on the use of context clues will show if he can control this important recognition skill. Did substituted words alter the meaning of the passages? If not, the child was probably using context clues adequately. Did he make corrections when his substitutions destroyed the meaning of the sentence? These actions as well as repetitions to attack unknown words are indicators of his use of context clues. However, if the child read right on, not attempting to use context and ignoring substitutions which left the passage with little meaning, it is apparent that he needs guided practice in this reading skill.

In interpreting a child's responses to the discussion questions, the teacher again will seek to identify patterns indicating the child's comprehension abilities and needs. Perhaps the child can answer correctly questions related to details:

What did Pete keep in the cove?
Who said the wind blew Pete to shore?
Who helped Pete fix the boat? and
Could anyone hear Pete call for help?

but is unable to tell why no one could hear Pete's call for help or why Pete's father is on the trail along the shore. These responses would suggest that although the child can identify and remember the details of the story he is unable to go beyond the print--to "read between the lines" in grasping the author's total message.

Maybe the child can identify the organization of the material by giving the main idea or suggesting titles for portions of the story. However, he may be unable to combine information from two or more sources to draw conclusions in answering questions such as "Why didn't Pete's mother convince him that the wind had saved him?" This would indicate that the teacher should guide the child in using his skills in identifying main ideas as he practices combining those ideas to make general conclusions.

Indications of a child's ability to use the ideas from his reading in going beyond the story or in applying his own experiences as he evaluates what he has read would come from his answers to:

What do you think Pete will find when he goes back to the cave?
How could the story have ended differently?
Why did Pete's dad smile and wink at him?

Thus, the classification and analysis of a child's responses will point out those comprehension skills he has mastered. These skills will then become the working tools used as the teacher guides the child's practice of those skills which will extend his reading comprehension.

Diagnostic teaching of reading is an on-going process. To guide a child's continuous growth in reading ability the teacher must be aware of the cutting edge between the skills a child has mastered and those over which he still needs to acquire control. However, the teacher needs some organized means for collecting the information which will enable her to identify that cutting edge. Thus, a plan for making and recording systematic observations of a child's word recognition and reading comprehension becomes an important tool as the teacher seeks to determine the abilities the child has acquired and those skills he still needs to master. By using such an observation record the teacher will be assisted in making guided observations as she secures the information needed to adapt classroom learning experiences to each child's changing needs.

INDIVIDUALIZING READING

Pearl Lee Nester

Teachers have wondered for a long time how they could individualize their reading programs and reach every child in their classrooms. Individualized Reading from Scholastic has an answer. I have seen it work in the classroom, on all grade levels, with all different types of students. Why does it work? What makes up an IRS kit? First, the most important components of all are bright, colorful, paperback books, one hundred of them, on every subject, and with a wide readability span. For instance, the third level kit contains lots of animal and adventure stories because this is what this age group enjoys. This third level kit, called Reaching Higher, contains a readability span from second to fifth grade. Even the color of the boxes was determined to be the third graders' first choice, red. One beautiful thing about our units is the fact that there are no grade levels indicated on the books. The teacher has access to the reading level of the book on her conference card and in the index of her teacher's notebook. Reading level is not important if you are struggling to learn to read. Just the knowledge that you can read something is far more important.

The fourth level kit, called Reaching Forward, is full of biography and sports stories. It has a second to seventh grade level readability span. Reaching Ahead, the fifth level kit has lots of fairy tales and fantasies for a readability span from second to eighth grade. The sixth level kit, Reaching Out, has history, social studies and science in novel form with a span from second to ninth grade.

Reaching Up is our exciting second grade unit with a variety of second level stories, third level stories and even read-aloud stories and picture books for those children who are still struggling to read and who need to be "turned on" to want to read and who need someone to literally "jump up and down" about books.

Reaching Out is the first level kit--an exciting unit, with some new books never before on the market. Look around you in your school library, the public library, and in the bookstore--see how hard it is to find books that first graders can actually read. Scholastic found some on the market and had others written and illustrated, in order to come up with 85 books (23 duplicate titles). The duplicate titles are ideal

---

Pearl Nester, Scholastic representative, Evansville, Indiana

for group conferences with two children in the first grade. In the first and second level units, there are a group of records to go along with some of the books so that the children may put them on the listening center and follow along.

Some of the other components of Individualized Reading from Scholastic are an activity card for each of the books, conference cards for each of them, Master Work Sheets on a wide range of ability levels for each kit, Student Reading Logs (35 in each kit), a Teacher's Guide and a Skill Supplement. There is a conference Notebook with ample conference pages for each child, group work pages, and pages for a record of conferences. There are two book cases in which you may store your books. However, when the books are in use, they need to be out so that the children may see the color, illustrations, and more importantly so that they may browse. A table, window ledge or even the floor, if necessary, will do. We are depending on this browsing to "turn on" some of those students. Looking at the spine of the book will not do that. Also included is an Informal Reading Inventory with a checklist to help establish the independent and instructional levels of the students.

The tools are all there. What is done with them is important . . . and, if you want the system to work, know something about what is inside those books so that when a child comes to you and says, "I would like a book just like this one," you will be able to help him.

I can't talk about individualized reading without talking about some of my experiences in the classrooms where I have helped to set up an individualized reading program. I am not a teacher and have never been but I do know that I can challenge children to read. If I can, you certainly can! You have been trained and I haven't. But I am excited about children's literature. In the last five years, I have read hundreds of good children's books. Isn't it exciting to think of the wonderful selection of good books available for children today? To quote from Arbuthnot's Children and Books, "In the last few years writers, artists, and editors have joined forces to make children's books so varied in content and so beautiful to look at that adults as well as children enjoy them."

Let's start an individualized reading by giving the children a key. Tell them to open a book, regardless of length, to any two pages. Make a fist. Now by starting with the little finger, every time they see a word that they do not know, raise a finger. If they get their thumb or see five words that they do not know, the book is too hard for them right now. Maybe later this year they will be able to read it more successfully. This is called the "rule of thumb." It is not a new rule, but it works. It will work just as well for first graders as sixth graders. The student does not have to admit to anyone but himself that he can't handle that book right now. Never forget to give him hope that later on he may be able to read it.

The student's book, his log, his diary of the books that he reads, should become a part of any book that he is reading. There is a place for his name and a picture. Maybe he would like to draw a self-image. The log is full of pages for information about the books he reads. There is a place for the title of each book and for the author of the book. When you are discussing this with the children, talk with them about how important the author, and often the illustrator, is to the book. No child has to read the first book selected. Ask the students to give the author a chance . . . to read the first chapter, before they definitely decide they do not want to read that book.

Next is a place for special words: new, different, hard, or intriguing words. These are words that they would like to add to their own personal vocabulary. Challenge them a bit. What better way than to read and to record new words to better remember them. At the bottom of the page of the log is a very special section--a place for personal notes about the book. What would they like to tell their best friend about the book? Please do not red pencil this log book. The child will share his log book with you in conference; but if you have comments, jot them down on your conference page.

The student's activity card is another component which is important to the book the child has read. This is the green card in the students' colored flip-top box. The students should have access to this box. Take for an example a book from the sixth grade kit, My Side of the Mountain by Jean George. Jean George--who was she? When I first read the book a few years ago, I kept wondering as I read, just how in this day and age anyone could possibly know in such detail how to exist in the mountains and forest, and I marveled at how expertly this survival was described. My curosity was aroused. May Hill Arbuthnot, a naturalist-and-artist with a zoologist husband, in Children and Books satisfied that curiosity. What an excellent example to children to help them understand that authors must know something about their subject matter to develop a good story!

The activity card gives four choices of activities. (1) There is no picture of Sam in his deerskin suit. Draw what you think he looked like from the descriptions in the book. (2) The book does not indicate what might happen after the family settled down in the woods. Write down what you think might happen. Write what you think might happen in the following year. (3) The information in this book would help anyone survive in the woods. What would you put in a small survival kit that people could take with them when they went camping? Make a list of the essentials. Ask others to contribute their ideas. (4) What would have made you most happy about living as Sam lived for a year? Write your thoughts and illustrate them.

In these four activities we have creative art, creative expression in written form, research with self-thought, and comprehension with an expression of personal feelings. The student selects the activity which interests him. All of the activity cards are language-arts

oriented, developing creativity and providing enrichment of the story they have read. What a different way to do a "book report!"

The teacher's conference card is the white card in the white flip-top box. After you have determined that you will have a series of conferences and have announced this to the class so those who have signed up will be prepared, you would begin the conference in the quiet, private conference corner with your conference note book and your card box. Johnnie has read My Side of the Mountain by Jean George. The card will tell you the reading level of the book (6). At the top of the card is a short synopsis of the story. I would hope that you have read the book, but if not, the synopsis will give you the story plot. Next are open-ended comprehension questions. There are page numbers to indicate after each question where the information is located. At the bottom of the card are literary appreciation questions. If the child tells you that he did not like the book, let him tell you why he didn't. It might be important to find out why he finished reading a book he did not like.

When a student becomes accustomed to the idea that you will listen to him and that you will talk with him in a conference, he is ready and willing to talk with you about the book he read. I particularly like to watch the second, third, and fourth graders "turn on" when they sit down with a teacher in a conference situation. I will never forget the third grader who recited I Know an Old Lady with me in a video-taped class. About 10 teachers were observing but the child was aware of only his book and that I was listening. His teacher had a "listening ear" in a conference and he expected the same of me.

The conference is particularly important to disadvantaged students who desperately need personal attention. You may be the only person in a long time who has listened to them with both ears.

What else are you going to be doing during the conference? Be using your "third ear" for one thing. Under the comprehension section you will be covering main ideas, story details, sequence, inference, judgments, word definitions and literary appreciation. Under Oral Reading you are going to be watching for phonetic analysis, structural analysis and expression. Comments and follow-up will cover some of the child's interests in the story, his accomplishments, and skills assignments. You may want to include notes about the activity he has chosen to do and his accomplishments.

After you have had a series of conferences with several children, look over their conference pages and begin to assign group work for children who need help in specific skills. In the back of the teacher's conference notebook are group work pages with columns that cover six areas: Comprehension, Phonetic Analysis, Structural Analysis, Related Skills, Oral Reading, and Projects in Progress. Under each area are such things as sequence, details, word meanings, consonants, blends, digraphs, vowels, etc. Several children may need help in a given area.

Jot their names down under the proper heading. Occasionally you will find a skills area where the entire class needs help. This is a time to turn to the basal texts. In many instances, small groups of children will need different skills help. This is a time to use the master skills worksheets, skills games, or other material to help the respective groups with their particular needs.

In each box is a group of yellow cards, Skills Activities Cards. They are for skills reinforcement through directed activities. The name of the activity is on the outside edge of the card along with a series of letters. These are "I" for Individual, "P" for Partners, "T" for Teams and "G" for Groups. Some of the skills activities cards will relate to the master worksheets but they are divorced from the books the children have read. The books are for reading for fun. Examples of the skills activities cards are:

A. Rhyme-a-word -- a player or players choose a word from a list outlined. Each player then writes a word that rhymes with his chosen word. The player or team with the most real words wins.

B. Unscrambled Eggs -- 2 players place the card between them. They then try to unscramble 9 sentences from the card on their papers. First one finished wins. They can check their answers on the back of the card. They may add a scrambled sentence that they create onto the card to challenge someone coming after.

This is just a sampling of the skills cards. Some teachers take old workbooks and tear out pages to make games out of them. At this age, the challenge of trying to outscore someone else is a game in itself. School can be fun and exciting without endangering the educational system.

In this same box is a group of pink cards, General Activity Cards. These can be one-time or on-going projects. Most of them involve the total class. Some provide opportunities for the students to get together to talk about the books they have read, drawing them together into a cohesive unit. For instance, one of the cards is called Extra, Extra! One child or partners can participate. They are to make up a headline and a short newspaper article about the book they have read. They then put the headline and story up on the bulletin board to persuade others to read the book. Remember that a newspaper article tells who, what, when, where, and why! Here is a project that will necessitate finding the main idea of the story and writing creatively. Classes can do a version of this by writing want-ads and placing them on the bulletin board to sell their book to classmates.

Title-of-the-week. A "panel of experts" is chosen by the class to decide on the requirements a book must meet to become a Title-of-the-Week. They vote on which book read in the class for a given time comes

closet to the chosen features. They may make a book jacket and award a medal. This could then be extended to a book-of-the-month, etc. The project has a group of students formulating criteria, exercising democratic processes and doing more creative writing and art work.

In any of the activities, either the students' activities after reading a book or the general activities involving the class, it is important to let the students be themselves. It is their activity, their bulletin board, their panel, for they are the ones you are trying to motivate.

Up to this point I have talked in generalities about the Individualized Reading Units and the components of the third through the sixth grade kits. The expanded first and second level kits have some differences. First, there are skills game packets for seat work in these two units, covering such things as making vowel houses and fishing for words. There are book and record combinations for use at the listening center. There are large and colorful charts to aid the students in visual discrimination. A beautiful vowel chart and one on digraphs and blends are two of the many charts. Worksheet book of skills masters is enlarged because you will need so many more of these with beginning readers. In all of the units it is a must that you take time to read aloud. Try it every day. Maybe you will have only time for a lovely short poem, but find that few minutes. Several weeks ago I bought a copy of The Hoosier Schoolmaster because it brought back memories of our seventh and eighth grade teacher-principal spending winter afternoons reading a chapter a day until finished.

Also in the first grade kit are 23 books with duplicate copies. Conferences with two children will be helpful to first year students. Exclusively in the second level kit is a little desk size flannel board with cutout figures for oral language activities, creative dramatics, art activities, establishing sequential skills, and other uses.

Now I would like to discuss with you some of the overall objectives and cover some of the ideas from the Teaching Guide, classroom experiences, and some of the questions and concerns asked by teachers who are planning to start an individualized reading program in any form.

The first concern is for you to feel comfortable starting such a program. First, let me quote to you a part of the foreword of the Teaching Guide as written by Priscilla Lynch, Director of Professional Services for Scholastic.

> Individualized Reading is not a method of teaching reading. It is a plan of organization wherein many methods of teaching reading may be used. The teacher must want to use this plan in order to have it be effective. The desire to use it stems from strong opinions about the fundamentals of the learning process. The

> teacher believes that children learn to read more effectively when they select their own reading material and pace themselves according to their own style of learning. The teacher believes that children will read more widely and with greater enthusiasm when they are self-motivated rather than when they are motivated synthetically. The teacher recognizes that in taking advantage of the child's own motivation, teaching becomes more economical, effective, efficient, and pleasurable.
>
> When children can read materials that they themselves have chosen and can direct their own learning activities with the support and guidance of the teacher, the learning experience becomes one that is intensely personal and relevant. There is a positive correlation between interest and effort, and the teacher will use that genuine interest to promote children's efforts to master the necessary skills of reading. The teacher believes that when the child is actively involved in creating his own program of learning, he will develop a sense of personal responsibility for mastering that learning. The child makes a commitment to his own growth.
>
> . . . the teacher provides the necessary materials, the optimum learning conditions for each child, and the encouragement, guidance, and understanding that is needed to realize those purposes. Individualizing the reading program offers a gratifying opportunity for the teacher to work as a distinct individual helping other individuals grow and develop to their fullest potential.

One of your first findings will be that the amount of the books in each unit is not nearly enough. Be prepared to pull books into the classroom from the school library. Take advantage of the books the children purchase through the book clubs, periodicals, textbooks, and even books that the children create themselves. I know one teacher using IRS who even uses a Sears, Roebuck & Co. catalog. If this is what she can get a student to read, she will have a conference with the student to discuss the catalog. There are good comic books on the market. You may have to use them.

It is important that your principal, and hopefully the parents, be aware of what you are beginning. It is strongly suggested that the parents be told about the plan ahead of time so that they will not become too anxious when Johnny goes home and says, "We ain't having reading anymore; we are having fun." It has happened.

As a teacher, you should become familiar with the routines and fundamental processes of the individualized reading program. With this familiarity will come security which the children will feel and respond to. Be sure to study the Teacher's Guide and examine the components

of the unit. Again, I cannot personally stress enough that you have some knowledge of the contents of the books. Perhaps you will only have time to scan them, but do this as thoroughly as possible. The children will want you to respond with them about the books. I have little ones say to me in the classroom, "You didn't really read these books, did you?" But they love to communicate with an adult about them. I think this puts us down on their level for a little while; and although they wouldn't want us to stay there, they do enjoy it for a short time.

The teacher is an individual too and must do what feels right for a particular classroom and class. There is no set pattern as far as arrangement of classroom, etc. Naturally, the more freedom within the classroom, the better the program seems to work. But, if you are more comfortable with your chairs in rows, you can still individualize reading. Carpet samples, small throw rugs, any spot on the floor makes a good reading position for a child. Yes, there will be one or two who would just as soon sit at their desks or tables. If you have no other materials for a reading corner, find some good sturdy orange crates and create such a corner. Incidentally, when we talked about people who should be "in the know," do not forget the school janitor. He can be of tremendous help if he feels a part of what you are doing.

One of the major problems of teachers who are thinking about starting the IRS reading program is how to find enough time for conferences. In most states, if you divide the normal amount of time spent in reading circles by the number of students in your classroom, you will find that you will have enough minutes during the day or week to spend a certain amount of time in a conference. There are odd times during the day in a self-contained classroom when part of the children may be out of the classroom. Band, choir, gym, even split bus schedules create such conditions. What do you do when half the class is out of the room? Why not use those precious minutes to get in a few conferences with children who remain in the classroom. Is your reading period blocked? Perhaps one day a week can be spent on a prolonged conference time. This is going to depend upon you, your classroom situation and your schedule. You are going to find that the conference is the most important minutes of the day both to you and to your students. The conference is primarily a sharing of thoughts. With some books the child needs time to organize these thoughts prior to the conference. These books are marked with an asterisk in your index. You may want to hand these cards to the children before their conferences to give them some thinking time.

The teacher needs to know what the book has meant to the child, how he applies the contents and implications to his life, whether he can apply what he has gained in the experience of reading the book to other aspects in his knowledge and how he can be helped to read more smoothly and easily. The child needs to feel that his opinions count and that he does not always have to find the one right answer in the book, and further that there are equally valuable answers in his own

heart and head and that the teacher is willing for him to share these ideas with her.

For individualizing reading we probably would start with three basic centers:

1. Art Center - This will be a busy area in which many of the activities will be created. Most of the activities suggested on the activity cards in the unit will require those materials normally found in a classroom, art paper, scissors, clay, magazines for collages and scraps of materials for puppets. A "found materials" box is of much value. The children can contribute buttons, the material scraps, small boxes, and just about any small item useful in creative art.

2. Writing Center - A table or small desk and a dictionary, paper and pencils are the necessary ingredients here. Heavy cardboard refrigerator or washing machine boxes make interesting writing centers. The children may plaster the inside with words of given themes. A classroom desk or table fits one of these boxes beautifully and provides that quiet retreat all good writers need for contemplation. A tape recorder is useful as a transcribing machine.

3. Book Center - The quietest corner of the room. You will need lots of books and other reading materials. Furniture may be a necessity but perhaps not. I have seen everything from a telephone cable reel brightly painted for a table to rocking chairs, carpet samples and of course lovely wood shelves.

One of the things that must be understood in the individualized reading program is that there is going to be some noise, probably low level, but there is a need among the children to talk quietly together about the books, the activities on which they are working. Some will even practice conferences. One of the most unhappy experiences that I have had with the program was in a fourth grade classroom where children were being permitted to move around the book table in small groups but in half an hour not one word was spoken. I was not surprised to learn several weeks later that IRS was not working in that classroom. The children did not feel free enough to make the program work.

Don't categorize the books in your book center. The children should not have to face the stigma of selecting books from the "easy to read" section. Remember we have already given them the "rule of thumb." This is all they should need. The reading level indicates only the difficulty of vocabulary and sentence structure, not concept load.

The children should be responsible for the Book Center and should determine how many children can browse at one time. They can determine how the books are to be signed out and how they are to be kept in order and when the magazines can be taken from the Book Center to become a part of the Art Center. If they set the routines, they will feel responsible for maintaining them.

You are definitely going to need a creative display area where the children can display their activities, create bulletin boards. Be sure that it is placed at their eye-level.

Time will not permit me to outline the preparation of the children for conferences, but the Teaching Guide gives you ideas for this. I do think we should discuss briefly the child who is not as apt to sign up for conferences. Perhaps you have a child who is desperately wading through a book and it is taking him forever. He is behind on the conference schedule. Why don't you go tap him on the shoulder some day and say, "You know, Johnny, we haven't had a conference for a long time. Why don't you bring your book and reading log and we will just talk about the part that you have read." During the conference you can find out why he has chosen such a difficult book and is determined to read it.

Children need a sense of well-being about the conferences that you have with them. This will keep them coming back for more. Another problem that you will have occasionally is a child who continually wants to read about one topic or subject area. Perhaps subtly you can help him select other books that will spread out his interest. The conference, above all, should be a time of enthusiastic exchange of thoughts, information, and planning. The child knows that he and the teacher will determine just what comes next in his learning. He knows that he will receive precise instruction, individually or with a group. He has confidence that his skills will increase and his capacity for learning will be fulfilled, and he knows that he will have an active part in that fulfillment.

As Priscilla Lynch said, "Individualized Reading from Scholastic is a practical reading program that makes the most of each individual child's own precious enthusiasm and allows you to make the most creative use of your time."

THE USE OF ORAL LANGUAGE BY THE DIAGNOSTIC TEACHER

Lawrence L. Smith

How do you select groups for reading instruction? In your reading groups, when do you allow a child to move into the next reader? Are you relatively certain that he is in the appropriate reader? How do you know? What were the criteria for selecting this particular reading level over another reading level? Was it because last year's teacher finished the previous basal reader? When a child is reading orally, what are you doing? What could you be doing that would make you a more effective diagnostic teacher?

The purposes of this paper are, first, to discuss some recent research findings concerning oral language and, second, to discuss how these research findings may be able to help you become a more effective diagnostic teacher.

What is a diagnostic teacher? The diagnostic teacher is one who is always attuned to the children and is gathering information about each child daily. From this information she assesses each pupil's needs, and she teaches the child according to these needs.

One avenue for determining some of the needs of a child in reading is through the use of oral language. Indeed, one of the most powerful tools a classroom teacher has is the use of the Informal Reading Inventory. The Informal Reading Inventory is developed by selecting paragraphs from the different levels of a basal reading series and by then having a child read several of the selections orally. While the child reads the paragraphs, the teacher marks the various types of word-recognition miscues the child makes; after the child has read the paragraph, questions about the story are asked of him. Questions are generally of the literal, inferential, or vocabulary nature. From the Informal Reading Inventory, the teacher can make several decisions. According to Betts, four reading levels can be determined: independent, instructional, frustration, and reading capacity level.[1]

The independent level is the highest level at which the child can read fluently, making very few word-recognition miscues and comprehending at least ninety percent of what he reads. This is the level at which recreational reading is done.

Lawrence L. Smith, Laboratory School, Indiana State University.

The instructional level is that level at which the child's assignments should be made. More word-recognition miscues, as well as a slightly lower comprehension score, will be present here than at the independent reading level.

The frustration level is that level at which the material is too difficult for the student to read. He makes considerably more word-recognition miscues, and he is not comprehending adequately. No assignments should be made at this level.

After the frustration level has been reached, the teacher may read passages at or above the frustration level; the student should then be asked questions about the passages that the teacher has read. This is done until his comprehension score falls below seventy percent. The student's reading capacity level, or his receptive language score, is the highest level at which he receives a score of at least seventy percent on the comprehension questions.

If a teacher will take the time at the beginning of the year to administer the Informal Reading Inventory to each of her pupils, she will have a tremendous amount of information from which to work. If all four levels are determined, the teacher will not only be relatively certain about the appropriate instructional level for each child, but she will also know which students need to be referred to the reading specialist for further diagnosis. In other words, she will know which children in her class are able readers and which are disabled readers. (Able readers are those students having an instructional reading level almost commensurate with their reading capacity level. Those students who have a reading capacity score significantly higher than their instructional reading level are considered disabled readers.)

Thus far, word-recognition miscues have been discussed; however, no mention has been made of what these word-recognition miscues are. Powell discusses two kinds of errors, scorable and recordable. The scorable errors are:

a) Omissions: the child omits a letter, syllable, or word.

b) Insertions: the child inserts a letter, syllable, or word.

c) Mispronunciations: the child slurs or uses a word that is not a real word.

d) Substitutions: the child substitutes one word for another; for example, <u>has</u> for <u>had</u>.

e) Transpositions: the child changes the order of the letters in a word; for example, <u>on</u> for <u>no</u>, <u>saw</u> for <u>was</u>.

f) Unknown words: the child refuses to attempt to pronounce a word, and the examiner pronounces it for him.

Recordable errors are those errors that are marked or recorded but are not counted in the word-recognition miscue ratio. The recordable errors are:

a) Repetitions: the child repeats part of a word, a complete word, or several words.

b) Punctuation omission: the child ignores the punctuation symbol.

c) Spontaneous corrections: the child immediately corrects an error that he has made.[2]

After the teacher has marked the types of errors a child has made, she may isolate the different types to see if the child is making a particular type of error more often than others. This may also be done with comprehension questions to determine whether the child is able to answer a particular type of comprehension question; for example, he answers questions of the literal and vocabulary type, but he is unable to answer inferential questions.

Now that we know the types of errors that we are looking for, it is necessary to discuss the number of errors a child may make and still be considered to be at his instructional level. For many years, reading people have been using the criteria for the Informal Reading Inventory developed by Betts.[3] His criteria for the instructional level were one error in every twenty words and a minimum comprehension level of seventy percent. If either one of these scores was to fall below the specified criteria, the child would be considered to be reading at a frustration level.

What Betts had done in his use of the Informal Reading Inventory and what others did after him were not the same. It has been previously stated that the Informal Reading Inventory is to be read orally. Betts' criteria were based on fourth grade children reading silently, then orally. Reading silently and then orally will most likely give a higher word-recognition ratio than just reading orally. Also, it is incorrect to assume that all reading levels will have the same word-recognition miscue ratio.

Several others since Betts have worked on the criteria for determining the instructional reading level. The most significant work on the Informal Reading Inventory in recent years was done by Powell[4] and Dunkeld.[5] Their work shows that by keeping comprehension constant at seventy to seventy-five percent, word-recognition errors vary at different reading levels. It is interesting to note that the word-recognition errors for instructional levels are not just a single ratio but a range of ratios. That is to say, by keeping the lower level of comprehension constant at seventy percent, a child reading at the third

grade level can have a range of errors from 1/13 to 1/26.[6] It is important to keep in mind that the criteria are not based upon the grade level of the child, but rather upon the difficulty level of the material being read.

CRITERIA FOR ORAL ONLY[7]

	P-2	3-5	6 and above
Independent	1/17	1/27	1/36
Instructional	1/8--1/16	1/13--1/26	1/18--1/35
Frustration	1/7	1/12	1/17

The information just presented is of significant value not only at the beginning of the year when the teacher administers the Informal Reading Inventory; it is also valuable for the daily reading lessons. If we keep in mind that through practice one should improve, we can do some speculating that can make the previous information useful on a daily basis. Remember that Powell's criteria were developed for reading orally at sight. In a typical reading lesson, the teacher gives the child a purpose for reading, has the child read the material silently, checks her purpose, and then if the teacher has the child read the material orally, she gives another purpose. If this were done, it would appear that the criteria for the instructional level would change because there should be a reduction in errors. Powell suggests that the reduction in errors might be twenty-five to thirty-three percent on the first re-reading.[8] Using twenty-five percent as our level for the reduction of errors, our chart would look something like the following:[9]

CRITERIA FOR SILENT AND ORAL

	P-2	3-5	6 and above
Independent	1/17	1/27	1/36
Instructional	1/10--1/16	1/16--1/26	1/23--1/35
Frustration	1/9	1/15	1/22

Using this chart as our criteria for daily reading lessons, we now have something else for the classroom teacher to use. Every time a pupil reads orally, the teacher will be "tuned in" to listen for the scorable errors that the child makes. While the child is reading orally and the teacher is listening, she may do one of two things to keep track of the errors. She may either use a pencil and put a check mark above each scorable error, or she may count the errors on her fingers.[10]

After the child has completed the oral reading, the teacher estimates the number of words read and divides by the number of scorable errors. If the child scores within the tolerable limits for word recognition, he is very likely to be placed in the appropriate reader. On the other hand, if on several occasions the teacher finds that the student scores lower than the minimum word-recognition ratio for that particular reading level, she will need to put him in an easier reader. When the child approaches or reaches the top of the instructional level on a regular basis, it is time to move him to the next reader. (A caution here: Be certain that the student knows the new words in the remainder of his present reader before moving him to the next reader.)

Through the use of the Informal Reading Inventory at the beginning of the year and through the use of the checking or the finger-counting method on a daily basis, the diagnostic teacher has some very powerful, workable tools through the avenue of oral language.

NOTES

[1]Emmett A. Betts, Foundations of Reading Instruction (New York: American Book Co., 1946), p. 448.

[2]William R. Powell, The Informal Reading Inventory (Urbana, Ill.: Center for Reading Research and Instruction, University of Illinois 1969) (Mimeographed), p. 22.

[3]Betts, Foundations of Reading Instruction, p. 448.

[4]William R. Powell, "Reappraising the Criteria for Interpreting Informal Inventories," in Dorothy DeBoer (ed.), Reading Diagnosis and Evaluation (Newark, Del.: International Reading Association, 1970), pp. 100-109.

[5]Colin G. Dunkeld, "The Validity of the Informal Reading Inventory for the Designation of Instructional Reading Levels: A Study of the Relationships Between Gains in Reading Achievement and the Difficulty of Instructional Materials" (unpublished Doctor's dissertation, University of Illinois, 1970).

[6]William R. Powell, "Acquisition of a Reading Repertoire" (paper presented at the Institute on Research in the Fields of Reading and Communication, May 22, 1973, University of Illinois Graduate School of Library Science and University Extension, Allerton House), p. 28.

[7]Powell, "Acquisition of a Reading Repertoire," p. 28.

[8]Powell, "Acquisition of a Reading Repertoire," p. 29.

[9]Acknowledgment is given to Janet B. Busboom for allowing the author to study the data in her unpublished Ph.D. thesis (in process), "An Investigation of the Relationship Among Various Testing Techniques on an Informal Reading Inventory," to help him determine the twenty-five percent error reduction.

[10]Acknowledgment is given to Dean William R. Powell, University of Evansville, for allowing the author to mention the finger-counting technique which Dean Powell has developed.

PITFALLS AND PLEASURES OF INDIVIDUALIZING THE READING PROGRAM

Priscilla Lynch

Making a distinction between prescribed instruction and personalized instruction is important. Prescribed or programmed instruction consists of an already structured program to which the child must fit his growth. Prescribed or programmed instruction can be likened to railroad ties to which the child must fit his stride. He must adjust his stride to an already prescribed space. If his stride is too short or too long, he falls. He fails. He has not adjusted to the steps someone has set for him.

Personalized instruction, on the other hand, gives the child the opportunity to structure the materials to suit his needs and interests. The material is adjusted to his stride. The student is offered many options within a loosely designed structure, and he has the freedom to "branch" as his interests and curiosity dictate. Success and failure are not the only options open to him. He also has interim steps that further his discovery and challenge his intellectual growth.

So when I talk about individualized instruction, I'm not talking about prescribed or programmed instruction. I'm talking about personalized instruction.

One of the most effective ways to have individualization of the reading curriculum happen is to relax. As teachers, we are often victimized by the requirements of the curriculum, or our idea of the curriculum, which may be a wholly different matter. We feel we must cover everything and in the process we often bury everything. We worry about the need to get in all aspects of the curriculum. We worry about the time we need. If we could begin to look at the curriculum as we should, as a Suggested Curriculum Guide, we'd be far more comfortable with our administrators and specialists who want us to fit the curriculum to our special children. We must look at the child as the curriculum and not as a disparate piece of subject matter.

If we can relax and listen to children, look at them, and encourage them to speak freely, we can learn much about their particular way of mastering concepts. If we allow them time to read, we can explore with them their responses to good literature. It is imperative that we allow

---

Priscilla Lynch, Scholastic Magazines.

children the opportunity to learn the skill Russell Stauffer refers to as "USSR," "uninterrupted sustained silent reading." We want to make lifetime readers out of children. It's a good thing they have a lifetime because they don't get the time in school! How many times have you heard a teacher say, "If you've finished your work, you can read your library book until the other children are finished." You know who gets the chance to read!

If we can get away from time as the constant factor in our teaching, we'll be helping children. How often do we fail a child just because he hasn't mastered a skill or concept in the length of time we've allotted him. We should assume that all children will learn a vital skill or concept according to their own rates of speed instead of according to some arbitrary time span we've set for them.

And I think we ought to take another look at what we are requiring them to learn. I can remember my fifth grade teacher who insisted that we learn all the capitals of all the states. I can't remember them all, and I'm not sure why I should remember them. If I am going to the capital of a state, I just want to be sure that the pilot knows where it is!

Children will learn that you require them to learn only long enough to pass the Friday quiz. And we do require of children that they become interested in something just because we see a need for their doing so. And when they obligingly obey us, they may remember it for only as long as we deem necessary. We all get into ruts. The classic example of this activity is the perennial question or subject, "What I did this summer." Children have come to expect that theme at the beginning of the school year just as we expect robins in the spring. They may faintly rebel but to no avail.

So I would ask you to relax as the first element in a successful individualized reading program. Relax and observe your children; observe their differences, their way of handling things and concepts; listen to their interpretations and encourage their opinions. Children's opinions can be very revealing. So take some of the pressure off yourself. It is usually you who is putting on the pressure.

We are conditioned just as we are conditioning our children. We want the one right answer in the book and we expect that answer of our children. Many teachers have been distressed by material that does not require exact answers. They don't know how to mark the children's progress. They are lost without specific guidelines, and I find the abdication of their own creative powers. I know some school systems are plagued by the demands for accountability. But this kind of irresponsible reporting should not be used against professional teachers.

Teachers ask me how many minutes a day they should devote to the program, how many minutes to a conference, how much time in general. I don't know! I can suggest, but the ultimate answer must come from

the teachers and the children themselves. I can suggest, for instance, that if you try to individualize your whole group at once, you'll wind up in the paddy wagon. There are teachers who have done this and survived, but their number is small. I can suggest that you individualize with one group at a time, or one or two children at a time, at either end of the continuum. I can suggest that you start out with your conferences being held during the time all the children are reading or working on quiet projects.

I can suggest that you ask yourself two very important questions; How much independence can the children handle? and How much of their independence can you handle? Now those questions I can't answer. Teachers must examine their own minds, hearts and habits to find the answers. I know that for many of us who have been in the profession for some twenty years or so, it is hard to get accustomed to the buzz of children learning. We've been conditioned to expect children to be quiet when they're reading or working at quiet projects. Some teachers can conduct conferences while the rest of the children are busy at learning centers. I can't. I still carry over my early training, and it's difficult, if not impossible, for me to get used to conducting a conference with that hum of children talking together. Many younger teachers won't be bothered by this at all. They've done their training in classrooms where the children move freely about the room during conference periods and discuss projects with each other. They are more easily reconciled to the hum of activity.

What is needed to individualize a reading program? First, a willing attitude on the part of the teacher. You can't make a teacher individualize, and if you try, you'll be worse off than before. Individualizing is a state of mind, an attitude, and a desire. You can't legislate it. A teacher must move according to her own rate of speed just as the children do. The teacher will individualize just as much as makes her comfortable, and no more. If more is required all at once, you can say good-by to the project.

One of the big problems we faced years ago when we tried to individualize the reading program was lack of books. We were told that there should be at least three books for every student. We just didn't have them. We swapped books regularly with other teachers. We raided the book closet for used books, and we plagued our administrators. Now that is no longer a problem--or at least not as large a problem as it once was.

One of the problems we still face has nothing to do with materials, with administrative support, or support from our librarians. The problem comes from lack of classroom management. Teachers become apprehensive when they think of twenty-five or thirty children all doing something different. What we sometimes forget is that given the opportunity and given a wide range of books, most children will choose to read! There must be a selection of other activities, quiet activities, for children to do in case they don't want to read that particu-

lar day. A chart can be put up with suggestions for quiet activities such as making a get well card, a birthday card, a thank you card, using the ditto masters, or special pages in the workbook for a certain skills group. One of the best sources of information in this regard is Jeanette Veatch's Reading in the Elementary School (New York: Ronald Press, 1966). Dr. Veatch devotes a whole chapter to activities for reading time.

May I caution you against introducing too many learning centers at a time. Start with one center, preferably the Reading or Book Center. Establish with the children how many people can be in the center at one time, who is responsible for the condition of the center (a librarian of the week) and how long one can browse. I've used an hourglass, an egg timer allowing six minutes for selecting a book to sit down with and try out. Again charts help reinforce the routine for the center.

You can't prepare for all contingencies, but some of them can be dealt with early. Children feel comfortable when they know what to do if a pencil breaks, paper is needed, paints need refreshing, and other supplies are needed. The Supply Clerk for the Week can help. If they need to find a word, they go to the Word Helper who is equipped with a dictionary and a spelling book. With older children, the Rule of Thumb works fine, but younger children often don't know they've missed a word. For the younger children, therefore, I either have a Listener of the Week who practices the Rule of Thumb or I have a boy or girl from fifth or sixth grade come into the room for ten or twenty minutes each day for a week to help the children with their reading.

Much of the haphazardness of the open classroom and many of the interruptions that plague teachers during the conference time can be avoided if a few minutes every morning is devoted to making sure everyone knows what he is going to do for the next half hour or for however long you need to take for your conferences each day. Supplies are checked, routines gone over, charts re-read, and the children have a good idea of what's going to happen. The conferences can be interrupted only in an emergency. This extra time is well worth the effort because the conferences will go more smoothly.

The teacher who wants to individualize the reading program has many more materials to choose from than we used to have. I'll touch on a few of those programs. The Scott Foresman collection of books called Invitations to Storytime is excellent for starting a library. Harper's Torchlighter and Torchbearer are a good base for beginning. The new Holt Rinehart program has Satellite books that can be used to individualize the program. The Economy Company has an expensive collection of paperbacks for early reading. The first collection is better than the second group. American Book has the Roundtable, and McGraw Hill/Singer has the delightful Carousel. Dell has the Yearling books. When new books come into the room through book clubs or the library, wait until two or three children have read the same book and then get together with them to make up questions and activities for the book. Put

them on 5 x 8 cards and keep them in a shoe box. This can be a very valuable learning situation because the children have to think about the book and then think about the questions and the answers that might be made.

There are some programs on the market that try to do much of the work ahead of time. Random House Pacesetters come with 50 hardcover books, questions and activities and a very strong skill program. Macmillan's Spectrum has thirty softcover books and a good skill program. However, Macmillan does not go below the fourth level of readability. Prentice-Hall has questions and activities, but does not have any books. Xerox has Reading Centers with 100 paperback books in each unit and questions and activities for each level.

Try to look over some of these before deciding what should be bought for your children, or at least get some brochures and go over these. More and more companies are realizing that individualized instruction cannot take place with just the basal reader and round robin reading. It has been a long time coming, but I do think the message has registered.

One thing to remember when starting to use this plan of organization is to alert your parents to what you are doing. Nothing distresses a parent as much as hearing his child say he didn't read today, meaning he didn't read aloud to the teacher in a group. Unless you let your parents know what you're doing, there are bound to be serious repercussions. Some parents would be glad to spend half an hour a week in the Visitor's Chair. My children and I decorated an old wooden chair and put it in the corner of the room with a small chair next to it. When a mother came to pick up a younger child from kindergarten or to help out with PTA projects, the children took delight in reading out loud to an interested adult. Our chair was not often empty because we enlisted the aid of the older boys and girls as well.

Now as far as the basal readers are concerned, keep them and use them! I get hollered at occasionally by the purists in individualized reading because I suggest keeping the basals. I'm a teacher. I've never thrown anything out! The basal readers have been designed to teach reading skills, and they should be used for that purpose. But they will be used very differently than they have been used in the past. We are accustomed to having children master skills and then read. When we turn that around and have children read for pleasure and through their reading determine what must be learned next, the motivation from the children is much higher. Each story in the basal is constructed with mastery of a particular skill in mind. The manual usually has a chart showing what skills are involved in which stories. When you pull together your small skill task group, the children go through the story in the basal that embodies the particular skill that is needed. The workbook is used the same way.

When the child has his conference and answers questions and reads aloud a favorite part or discusses with the teacher the words that he has entered in his reading log, the teacher makes the diagnosis of what skill is needed next. Several other children need that skill too, so the group is formed, the skill is taught, and the group is disbanded with some means for reinforcing that skill, either a workbook page, a ditto master, a skill game, or a self-selected task. In this way children's needs are met quickly, they have a feeling of growth, and they are not labeled. I feel rather strongly that we over-teach phonics particularly, and I'm upset when skills are taught to the whole class. I suppose there are times when the whole group will need to master a new skill such as syllabication, but I've often wondered about the value of those rules of syllabication (Can anyone remember?). And we dwell on hard and soft g and c or the several sounds of ou or ow. It seems to me that children are confused enough by our language without making it even more muddled. And I also feel strongly about learning words in isolation. We don't read them in isolation. Children should learn to find meaning from context as quickly as possible. And presenting a long list for them to read aloud is not really proving anything except that they have good memories. It does not mean that they can get meaning out of a sentence. I've seen too many classes with children mouthing ca, ba, fa, and when they go to read a book, they can't read and they are very disappointed. I've also seen classes where the children receive such a heavy dose of phonics that there is no time to read a book. In short, I think we've become so conscious of teaching phonics and "regular" patterns that we've forgotten why we're doing all this, and the children never do find out why they are going through all these mechanics.

Some people are under the misapprehension that individualized instruction precludes group work. Well, the skills are taught in groups and the children like to read with each other for fun or for a common interest. They aren't reading on the same page in the same book of course, but they do like to share a particular part of the story with a friend. I have two-children conferences quite often, when two youngsters have finished the same book about the same time. I like to do this especially when the questions about the book call for an opinion rather than the one right answer in the book. Children should learn how to support their opinion with relevant detail. Children have very strong opinions when they are encouraged to voice them. Of course, if you're going to ask open-ended questions, you must be willing to accept the answers.

Now what are some of the pitfalls we run into when we use this plan of organization? Most teachers find that the conferences run on too long. Please remember that this may be the first time the youngster has had the teacher all to himself without interruptions. He'll want to tell the teacher every single detail about the book. Part of the learning in the conference is the matter of main idea and relevant detail. Children need to learn this skill right away so that they can answer the questions you ask in their own words, indicating their

mastery of the material in the book. The teacher's questioning should progress from literal recall of fact--what does the book say--to questions of an inferential, critical thinking sort--what does the book say to this child and how does he use what he's learned.

Here again, I'd use an egg timer so that the conferences don't run on too long. Conferences can be kept to a seven minute period and the six minutes shown on the egg timer gives notice for wind-up time. Once the novelty effect of the one-to-one conference has worn off, as it does, it will be easier to convince the children that they should stay within the allotted time so that others will have a chance for a conference time.

Teachers worry if they don't get a chance for a conference with every child every week. They worry about not covering the skills, and they worry that the children might not be reading. Are the children reading? Look around, walk around the room for a minute or two in the morning after they've started their silent reading time. Just a word or two or a quick question will tell you whether they are indeed reading. The children's attitudes toward reading will show you. Do they open their books willingly, do they share a funny picture with a friend, do they come to conference time willingly? And on this matter, I'd schedule the conferences for the first month or so. After that, I'd have a sign up sheet on the bulletin board or a space on the chalkboard for their names to be recorded for a conference.

The child who wants a conference on every book must be convinced that he should decide on the book he really wants to talk about most. And the opposite is the child who doesn't want to come to conference. He may be threatened by the one-to-one situation. Have him sit in on a conference with a very secure youngster so that he comes to understand the routine and the fun of the conference. The privacy for the child is not invaded but the opportunity to talk is offered.

As far as conference questions are concerned, one of the best guides to common questions--such as Why did you choose this book? Can you tell me about it in a few words, Does the story make you feel like doing something? If you could, would you change the story? In what way?--is a list in Dr. Veatch's book.

Then there's the child who can't find a book. There may be a whole bookcase filled with books, but he acts like a bumblebee, picking up and putting down, darting from one to another. Did you ever look at a buffet and lose your appetite? My trouble is that I don't do it often enough. This youngster may not be able to cope with such a decision. I'd select three books on his level and have him come to a conference during which I'd read alternate pages with him, looking at the pictures with him and help him make a decision for himself.

The child who never finishes a book can be another problem. He's forever in the book center either taking one out or putting one back. I'd let this happen just a few times and then I'd pick three books I thought he'd like and have a conference with him. We'd go over the books until he found one he thought he could finish. If he did not finish that book, I'd ask for one paragraph telling why he didn't like the book. You'd be surprised how quickly he will change his habits.

Another novelty effect to be watched is the children who read all easy books and won't attempt one on their level of capability. Now this may be because they enjoy the headiness of reading right straight through a book without difficulty and this makes them feel very successful. Let them read through the easy books once. It's when they go back to read them all over again that you take steps. Again, I'd pick three books on the child's level and during the conference I'd tell him a little about each one, assure him that he will be able to read them by having him read a page from the middle of each book, and encourage him to try.

There are some children who insist on reading books that are too hard for them, and then they become frustrated and give up the whole business. It may be that one of their friends is reading a harder book and they want to read it too, just to keep up. Again, I'd select three books on the child's level and tell him a little of the plot of each so that he's intrigued by the books.

Some teachers worry about single topic reading, all dinosaurs, all horse or sport stories, or all mysteries. The experts are of two minds. Some think the narrow reading prevents the child from expanding his horizons; don't feel it makes any difference, just as long as the children are reading something! You'll have to be the judge in this matter. Personally, I've always tended to think that boys who get excited about sport stories or girls who love horses are not going to have anything terrible happen to their reading skills and love reading if they stay with the one type of book. I don't know whether any of you are old enough to remember the Nancy Drew stories. I think I read every one of them, and I don't think my psyche was particularly warped by that habit.

The one problem you are certain to run into is the child who simply cannot work independently. If you provide material that is easy enough, he'll go through it like a shot and will be pestering you with questions. What do I do next? I'm all finished. If your provide work that is challenging, he won't even try. He interferes with other children's concentration, he has lost his lunch money, he can't find his other book, and this is the child who is <u>never absent</u>. Now I don't wish this child any harm, but he <u>could</u> have a cold once in a while like everyone else! He's the sort of child who needs Lyman Hunt's categorical imperative--Sit down, shut up, and read. He's the child who can profit from book-record combinations. He's also the child who needs to do the fake reading during the uninterrupted sustained silent reading time. He can go through several books, looking at the pictures, finding a word or

two along the way that he can read. And he needs lots of dittos and workbook pages for practice on skills. And he needs a disproportionate amount of individual attention. You'll get to the point of keeping a large bottle of aspirin in your desk drawer and you'll find yourself contemplating early retirement.

Some of the prepared materials on the market come with Pupil Logs, but you can make your own with your children. They can be decorated and kept for recording the date the book was started, the author and title, and special words that were interesting or difficult, and possibly a word or two about the book or a picture of some part of the book. Please don't use the logs as a vehicle for book reports. Compulsory book reports are nothing more nor less than police actions. If a child wants to give his opinion about a book, then it is a book review and children should be able to see some actual reviews before writing one. One teacher I know keeps a loose leaf notebook with the titles of the books in the room. When a child has finished a book, he can place a colored square on the page indicating his estimate of the book, red for excellent, green for good, yellow for fair, and blue for less than expected. Some teachers have the children write in the one word that describes their feelings. I can remember hearing one child say, "I liked that book so much I forgot about my mosquito bite." Now, that's a book report!

There are many alternatives to the book report. A child can read a part of the book to the class as a cliffhanger to get them to read it. Another child can read a part of the dialogue in the book; children can write blurbs for their books or draw book jackets for their books; children can make up television advertisements for the book, or several children can put on a puppet play with characters pasted on tongue depressors. Their enthusiasm will encourage their friends to read a certain book far quicker than your recommendation and rightly so. They trust the likes of each other; they trust each other. They are not reading to be uplifted or enlightened. They are reading to explore, to experience, and to enjoy.

We can capitalize on the resources of every child to help him develop to his fullest potential. We can capitalize on our <u>own</u> resources to our fullest potential as professionals. Individualized reading is not a method. It can't be pinned down to a line-by-line, day-by-day manual. It is a plan of organization that reflects an attitude toward children and toward the learning process. A teacher in Elizabeth, New Jersey, sent me the comments of her children who were asked how they liked individualized reading. One little boy said he liked individualized reading because he could go to the bathroom whenever he wanted. Now that's not exactly what we were aiming at, but it does tell us something about what such an attitude can do for a child. He feels he's trusted, he's valued, he has integrity and dignity, he's important, he's self-confident, and he doesn't have to train his sphincter muscle to suit someone else. We can't measure those things on a standardized test; they're not in the cognitive domain. These things are in the affective domain, the domain of feelings, motivation, attitudes and beliefs. But

if, as Piaget and others have pointed out, we learn what we want to learn, then wanting becomes crucial to our work. There is no way to measure a smile but that smile tells us a lot. A smile can tell us what that book did to that child. And that's what reading and literature are all about, isn't it? It's communication with another mind so that our minds and hearts may share in another's experiences and hopes and thoughts.

It is absolutely essential that children learn the endings s, ed, and ing and learn them rapidly. It is also essential that they meet that foolish little duck, Ping, that they get to know the loving Charlotte and her friend the pig, Wilbur. Children deserve to use their skills while enjoying the Borrowers, Henry Huggins, and Ramona the pest, the only kindergarten dropout in literature. Long John Silver will stay with them for a long time as will Toad of Toad Hall. They'll remember Johnny Tremain and John Henry. They understand the feelings of the Ugly Duckling better than we do. And Peter Rabbit isn't just a rabbit. He's a universal and he speaks to all children.

I've mentioned some of the pitfalls of individualized instruction in reading. There are pleasures too. We'll get to know our children in a deeper dimension. We'll know that each child is growing in his own special way. We'll know we are affective teachers and we'll feel more like effective human beings.

We are in one of the most troubled times in the history of education and perhaps one of the most challenging and interesting. We're also in one of the most misunderstood, and most criticized, most difficult professions there is. Of course, it is also the most rewarding.

Additional copies of this bulletin may be ordered from:

CURRICULUM RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER
Jamison Hall
School of Education
Indiana State University
Terre Haute, Indiana 47809

Also available:

INDIANA MIDDLE SCHOOL SURVEY

NON-PUBLIC PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS IN INDIANA

A DEVELOPING CURRICULUM IN ENGLISH
Kindergarten through Grade Twelve

SOCIAL STUDIES IN INDIANA ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

ROLE AND STATUS OF CURRICULUM WORKERS IN INDIANA

ROLE AND STATUS OF CONTENT, MEDIA, AND SPECIAL SERVICES SUPERVISORS

INNOVATION IN INDIANA SCHOOLS

CONSERVATION EDUCATION IN INDIANA SCHOOLS

ECOLOGY, CONSERVATION, POLLUTION
A bibliography of materials

TEACHING READING THROUGH CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

LEARNING ACTIVITY PACKAGES

OPEN SPACE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

LITERATURE AND LEARNING TO READ

USING THE BLOCK PROGRAM TO PREPARE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS AT INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY